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THE IDEALS OF ASCETICISM

WITH all the honesty and scientific zeal that he possesses but without any claims to detachment, the author examines religions the world over in respect to ascetic doctrine and practice and tests their value in the light of his own beliefs and experiences.

"The honest use of one's own religion as a key clearly puts it to a severe practical test. Deficiencies will be revealed as easily as superiorities."

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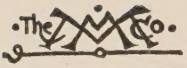
THE IDEALS OF ASCETICISM



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THE IDEALS OF ASCETICISM:

AN ESSAY IN THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGION

BY

O. HARDMAN, M.A., D.D.,

CHAPLAIN OF ALLEYN'S COLLEGE OF GOD'S GIFT AT DULWICH AND WARDEN OF THE ROCHESTER AND SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN DEACONESS INSTITUTION

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Quære quodcumque volueris;
Et non invenies altiorem viam supra,
Nec securiorem viam infra,
Nisi viam sanctæ crucis.

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TO

THE REVERED MEMORY

OF

ERNALD LANE

DEAN OF ROCHESTER FROM 1904 TO 1913

PREFACE

THE comparative study of religion may be pursued by two distinct methods The first is the way of the scientist, who considers that it is not his business to inquire into the validity of religious beliefs or to attempt to estimate the relative values of different religions. Working in a spirit of critical detachment, much as a botanist would compare the various forms of plant life, or an anatomist the structures of animal bodies, he sorts and re-sorts the vast accumulation of facts gathered by the industry of workers in many fields, and endeavours to discover from them the laws governing man's religious progress and relapse. Not presuming to distinguish between higher and lower, but only between more developed and less developed, he regards the evolutionary sequence of religions as but a single aspect of social development, and tries to read its story.

The second way is that of the student who professes a particular religion with conviction, and approaches his subject with admitted "prejudices." With no less of honesty and of scientific zeal than the worker who pursues the other method, but without any claim to detachment, he takes his own religion as a standard, and, frankly comparing other religions with his own, and examining them closely in the light of his own beliefs and experience, he tests their validity and their value, and grades them as higher or lower according to the measure of their approach to that standard. This is confessedly to go beyond the province of science: and the refusal to limit the scope of inquiry is defended by the double contention that strict detachment in such a matter is barely possible; and that, even if it were possible, it is not desirable, for pure science is incapable of providing an adequate description and interpretation of religion. If religion is indeed related to Reality external to man and is not an empty delusion of his early days destined to pass away in his riper development, then a personal knowledge of religion in its purest form, in its ultimate correspondence with Reality, and in its complete satisfaction of man's needs, is the necessary clue to the maze of human faiths. Any adequate interpretation of the facts of man's religious

history necessarily involves value-judgments, and is possible only to those who hold in their hands the measuring-rod of true religion. The Christian student can have no hesitation, therefore, in adopting this second method as being at once more natural, more interesting, and more promising. Nor can it be truly said that he is assuming the results of his study. To use one's own religion honestly as a key is clearly to put it to a severe practical test. If by applying it the student is enabled to co-ordinate, to interpret, and to estimate other phases of religion, and as he does so to perceive with growing certainty wherein the superiority of his own religion consists, he will have discovered a new and powerful apologetic. But, on the other hand, it is at least possible that the study he pursues will reveal deficiencies in his own religion; and, if he is prepared to follow the truth wherever it may lead him, he may be required to exchange his religion for some more adequate form.

Though the comparative study of religion is yet in its infancy, the nature of the gain to be expected from it is already clearly seen. Without in any degree blurring the vital distinctions that mark off the creeds and religious practices of men, it begins to declare unmistakably the spiritual fellowship of the whole human race; and, by revealing an essential relationship between forms and ideas which were apparently unconnected, it is making possible that deeper understanding which comes with wider vision. The common elements of man's religious and moral experience begin to be viewed in their full range and proper proportion, and, as a result, to be made more intelligible in every place of their appearance. This essay is an attempt thus to indicate the full scope and the true significance of Asceticism, a subject which, as it seems to me, stands in special need of elucidation by the comparative method; and I have tried to contribute towards a right appreciation of the many varieties of ascetic practice by arranging them in relation to the ideals by which a true asceticism must be inspired. I earnestly hope that, in addition to any interest it may possess for the student of religion, the book will prove to have some value as a reasoned appeal to the practice of a strenuous Christian life; for the world of to-day stands in sore need of true ascetics in every land, men and women of a generous enthusiasm, eager loyalty, and disciplined strength.

O. H.

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THE IDEALS OF ASCETICISM

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE AND RANGE OF ASCETICISM

I

THE word *asceticism* looks back to the arduous physical training that was undertaken by Greek athletes and warriors, and recalls that people's high appreciation of perfect bodily development and their admiration for unusual powers of physical endurance. In its original form it denoted the process of self-training for these things by restraint and exercise. ἄσκησις included the methodical regulation of the body in the satisfaction of its appetites, and the repeated practice of physical exercises, as means towards the increase of vitality and the improvement of muscular power and control.

While, however, the Greeks attached much importance to this bodily discipline, they were not blind to the insufficiency of such training as a preparation for the whole of life's issues. They saw that not all of these were to be met successfully by physical efficiency alone; and some among them declared the necessity for the practice of ἄσκησις of another kind. Reflecting on the reason why the Spartans always came to grief when they were faced with the temptation of power and riches, Aristotle distinguishes between the ἄσκησις which gave them military success, and that other ἄσκησις which would have enabled them to make a right use of it.[1] This extended reference of the word carries us at

[1] *Pol.* ii. 9: πρὸς γὰρ μέρος ἀρετῆς ἡ πᾶσα σύνταξις τῶν νόμων ἐστί, τὴν πολεμικήν· αὕτη γὰρ χρησίμη πρὸς τὸ κρατεῖν· τοιγαροῦν ἐσώζοντο μὲν πολεμοῦντες, ἀπώλλυντο δὲ ἄρξαντες διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐπίστασθαι σκολάζειν μηδὲ ἠσκηκέναι μηδεμίαν ἄσκησιν ἑτέραν κυριωτέραν τῆς πολεμικῆς.

once into that higher sphere which we are accustomed to look upon as the proper domain of asceticism: but in so doing it overleaps an intermediate discipline which is widely practised. This is the asceticism of the really serious worker. Sometimes linked to the training of the athlete by a corresponding bodily discipline, which is undertaken, however, not for athletic distinction, but for health's sake and for physical fitness such as will contribute to the full discharge of the day's work, it goes far beyond the disciplinary control and exercise of the body. It is that consistent rejection of the superfluous, that cultivation of simplicity and hardness, which proceed from an intense concentration of outlook and purpose on the part of one who has set himself with determination to the accomplishment of an exacting task conceived under the limitations of the present world-order. The absorbing occupation may be violin-playing or empire-building, the management of a business or the quest of knowledge: but, whatever its nature, it is accepted as the one thing that counts, and all else is strictly subordinated to it. Other interests are ruthlessly thrust aside, and the whole manner of ordering the life has regard only to the dominant purpose. Extreme hardship and costly deprivation are willingly accepted, if only they contribute to the achievement of the end in view. A passion for mastery combines with the pressing needs of man's life to make this kind of asceticism not uncommon: it would probably be true to say that it has figured prominently in the conduct of all who have successfully accomplished a serious purpose in life.

While, however, it may be considered legitimate to apply the term *asceticism* to each of these types of self-discipline, in practice the word almost invariably denotes an activity which is distinguished from the discipline of the runner and the wrestler, and from that of the worker, by its wider reference. The ascetic, in the sense in which it has become customary to use the term, is concerned with moral and spiritual issues, and the bounds of his universe lie beyond the vision of those others. One with them in some of the methods he adopts, he moves in an altogether different plane; though the precise nature of the issues with which he deals and the actual value of the asceticism he practises are matters on which popular opinion is sharply divided.

By some it is held to represent a legitimate discipline or

mortification of the body, and by others to be nothing but unjustifiable brutality prompted by a mistaken creed. On the one hand the typical ascetic is conceived as a pale and fragile saint, unsparing in bodily discipline, accustomed to support life on a minimum of nourishment, and very probably possessed of certain unusual powers which are believed to be the reward of extreme self-mortification. He is regarded with the respect which is due to one who exhibits a signal degree of triumph in that subordination of the flesh which is man's peculiar obligation. On the other hand asceticism stands more confusedly for semi-starvation, cruel scourging of the body, and the use of various uncomfortable and forbidding pieces of apparatus such as heavy chains, hair shirts, and beds of spikes. The ascetic is thought of as an expert in self-torture, a religious fanatic, who subjects his person to quite unnecessary suffering and a good deal of deplorable nastiness. A specialist in the art of outraging human nature and a thoroughly unprofitable member of society, he merits nothing but contempt and stern disapproval. These he receives in full measure.

An examination of the literature of the subject shows that these popular estimates reflect a fundamental disagreement between two schools of Christian thinkers. On the one hand asceticism is held to be "voluntary self-discipline" and is warmly approved. Dr. Illingworth, who uses this description,[1] says that "Christian asceticism is such self-discipline as may the better enable us to fulfil the manifold responsibilities of life": [2] and he considers that "asceticism, in its proper sense, is a thing of no one time or place, but an essential ingredient in all true life." [3] Dr. Gwatkin, on the other hand, takes exception to this statement, arguing that Dr. Illingworth's use of asceticism is "inconvenient and misleading." He says,[4] "If then the physical universe is a

[1] *Christian Character*, p. 51.

[2] Ib. p. 61. [3] Ib. p. 60.

[4] *The Knowledge of God*, p. 80 f. Dr. Gwatkin's protest finds support in the practice of many competent writers. Dr. Bethune Baker says (*Cambridge Theological Essays*, p. 566), "Where the origin of evil is found in the material environment which is the setting of man's life, the ethical deduction is that the good cannot be attained except by withdrawal from active life, by crushing out the natural, human feelings associated with the bodily nature of man, and fixing all attention on the free unfettered exercise of the intellectual or the spiritual faucies. 'Asceticism' thus becomes the principle of

true expression of eternal power and divinity, it has a value inconsistent with pantheistic or ascetic forms of thought which make it the mere husk of the spiritual, or even its worst enemy. (*Footnote*). This formally contradicts Mr. Illingworth's dictum that 'asceticism is an essential ingredient in all true human life'; but I think our difference is only verbal. One man holds that things of sense, especially the body and most of all relations of sex, are impure and dangerous, while another who believes that 'every creature of God is good' holds further that certain pleasures ought to be abstained from under certain circumstances or even permanently by certain persons; and I do not think Mr. Illingworth distinguishes these two motives less sharply than I do. But I submit that it is inconvenient and misleading to mix up lines of conduct depending on such different motives under the general term asceticism. As the second line of conduct cannot be distinguished as Christian asceticism if it enters (as I fully grant it does) into all true human life, then I prefer to call the first line of conduct asceticism, leaving the words austerity or self-discipline to describe the second."

For answer it would seem to be sufficient to point out that it is not possible to restrict the scope of any term in the artificial way that is suggested. The application of *asceticism* to non-dualistic self-discipline has a long history, is still in general use, and must be recognised as at least legitimate. Indeed, it might fairly be claimed that the

the highest life. The asceticism which from early times has found a home in the Catholic Church is, negatively at least, based on the same conception, and a divergence from Christian ideas; even if, in its positive aspects, in some of the forms it has assumed, it may be justified as in ethical correspondence with Christian aims."

And Dr. F. Homes Dudden, in his article on Asceticism in the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, considers that "Asceticism is a deliberate attempt to eliminate and uproot the sensuous, to banish it altogether from the sphere of consciousness. It is not content with a doctrine of mere subordination. It does not stop short with teaching men to govern their wants, to subject them to the service of a higher end and purpose. It bids men stifle and suppress them to the utmost of their ability. The body is represented as the enemy of the soul, and the way of perfection is identified with the progressive extirpation of the natural inclinations by means of fasting, celibacy, voluntary poverty, and similar exercises of devotion. Hence asceticism may be described as the gospel of negation—negation of the world and negation of the flesh, each of which is apt to be confounded with negation of the devil."

restriction of the term to an exclusive association with that particular theory of man's nature which provides the most direct argument for the practice of asceticism in an extreme form would do unwarrantable violence both to its derivation and to its history. It has stood persistently for moral and religious self-discipline innocent of any dualistic foundation, as well as for the purgation of the spirit from its material and therefore, as some believe, evil environment, and the former use cannot be arbitrarily ruled out. The term implies a moral and religious foundation for the practices which it denotes, but it leaves the precise nature of the foundation altogether undefined. The moral ascetic need hold no views whatever about the spirit. The only belief that is essential to the creed of the religious ascetic is belief in the existence of a transcendent supernatural order to which he is himself related: but he is pledged to no particular theory of the relation between spirit and matter.[1]

2

The ἄσκησις of the moral or religious "athlete" differs, then, from that of the athlete proper, in that it has for its object, not the perfecting of the physical body or the best possible accomplishment of some form of physical activity, but the development of the higher powers belonging to the spirit. This justifies, necessitates rather, some important extensions in the application of the term which are not always

[1] Of the twelve contributors to the series of articles on Asceticism in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (referred to subsequently as E.R.E.), six openly recognise the inclusion of both disciplinary and dualistic types. The clearest statements on the point are found in the Introduction and in the section treating of Greek Asceticism. In the former Dr. T. C. Hall says that "Two quite different conceptions mingle in the history of asceticism. One of them preserves the original meaning of discipline of the body for some ultimate purpose. . . . The other conception distrusts the body altogether. Asceticism has then as its function not the training but the destroying of the body or the negation of its importance."

In the latter Dr. W. Capelle says, "Religious asceticism, as it might be called, rests upon a twofold dualism, body and soul, Earth and the Beyond, being sharply and almost irreconcilably opposed to one another. But, . . . an entirely different congeries of ideas had given birth to a kind of asceticism which, in contrast to the religious, may be called the rationalistic or ethical, or more precisely the volitional asceticism."

recognised. A Russian moralist, Vladimir Solovyof, teaches that the primary data of morality are the feelings of shame, pity, and reverence, which give rise respectively to asceticism, or self-regarding morality, altruism, or neighbour-regarding morality, and religion, or God-regarding morality.[1] If all moral action could be thus simply analysed, any extension of the meaning of the word *asceticism* would be unnecessary. For the moral athlete, as for his fellow the physical athlete, it would stand simply for direct self-training. But, when shame and pity operate together, the result is neither asceticism nor altruism in the original simplicity of the use of those terms, but it has become altruistic asceticism, even as, when shame and reverence are found in conjunction, religious asceticism is produced. Asceticism, that is to say, may mean more than the purely self-regarding morality which is the outcome of shame. It may cover those altruistic and religious attitudes which alone can render it adequately effective in its work of developing moral and spiritual power.[2]

It is clear that, apart from the work of self-mortification, in which he may remain as separate and self-regarding as any athlete, the understanding ascetic is constrained to train himself as a member of the fellowship which constitutes the spiritual order; or, at the least, as one who is under obligation to conform to the moral order, though it be apart from the recognition of any supernatural authority. He is not an independent unit capable of solitary expansion, but is precluded from any purely self-regarding effort towards the cultivation of the higher life by the fact that the growth of that life is conditioned by intercourse with other beings of the same order. He knows that, whereas a man may satisfactorily develop his physical powers by himself, he can develop his moral and spiritual powers only by entering into relations with others. His asceticism, therefore, must look towards, and definitely relate to, God, or man, or both,

[1] *The Justification of the Good*, pp. 25–91.

[2] *Cf.* Solovyof, p. 140, "The path to which the carnal instinct calls us, and against which we are warned by the feeling of shame, is a path which is to begin with shameful, and proves in the end to be both pitiless and impious. This clearly shows the inner connection between the three roots of morality, all of which are thus seen to be involved in the first. Sexual continence is not only an ascetic, but also an altruistic and a religious demand."

since it is a matter of the right adjustment of those moral and spiritual relationships by which man's highest life is conditioned. It follows that, whereas all the ἄσκησις of the athlete is literally "training" for contest, the moral or religious ascetic is not in a position to distinguish so sharply between preparatory discipline and actual trial. Even when he withdraws himself from society in order to train his soul apart, he cannot temporarily sever relations with God until, by virtue of his "training," he is ready to resume his intercourse with Him. Whether in the world or out of the world, he must at one and the same time run his race and endeavour to improve his running powers, wrestle with his antagonist and strive to develop his strength and skill as a wrestler.

As a result of this double distinction the ascetic may conceive his activities not only as "training" or self-development, but also, and mainly, as a direct process of self-adjustment, in which he aims at self-realisation by a persistent endeavour towards ideal expression of the true self in its relations with God and man. Always, it is true, there must be present to his mind the intention of promoting his own soul's progress, if the word *asceticism* is to be properly applied : [1] but this aim need not figure in the centre of the consciousness. With but little thought of self-improvement, though not altogether forgetful of that end, the ascetic may practise his asceticism as an atonement for sin or as a means of expressing penitence, [2] or as the necessary condition and accompaniment of mystical intercourse with God.[3] Or

[1] *Cf.* Dr. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. p. 76. "The ascetic life which is devoted to the procuring of an enjoyable life for others, for the sake of that life, is no longer ascetic in principle."

[2] In his *Christian Character*, p. 49, Dr. Illingworth reminds us of the frequent use of the word to denote penitential self-denial. "Besides its prudential or rational aspect, Christian asceticism has also a penitential or emotional aspect, which is more individual and voluntary, but has played an important part in the spiritual history of the world. For in proportion as a man of feeling realises that his sins have wounded One who loves him, he will desire to express his emotional sorrow by, in some way, punishing himself, not as a matter of moral obligation, but as a necessity of love. And this has been a frequent and powerful motive in the asceticism of Christians."

[3] In summing up his notable work on *The Mystical Element of Religion*, Baron von Hügel describes "a larger Asceticism," which covers first the "ordinary Asceticism, ever connected with at least some one phase, an early one, of every genuine Mystic's history";

again, he may give himself to the practice of a purely unselfish though frankly self-regarding discipline on behalf of his fellows, and still deserve his name.[1] For if, as a matter of duty, one man abstain from the use of alcoholic drink for the sake of helping a weak-willed brother and so avoiding offence, while another abstains as a matter of self-discipline, the former is as much an ascetic as the latter, though his abstinence is not undertaken with a sole and direct view to self-improvement. His aim is altruistic, but the ground of his action is obligation arising out of relationship, and self is by no means out of sight in the matter. He controls his body in an attempt to establish that ideal system of relationships which constitutes the moral order, and in so doing he performs an act of self-expression whereby the self is consciously advanced towards its perfection.

It is scarcely necessary to add that asceticism is always a self-directed activity. It is essentially a mode of moral and religious intercourse, and must therefore be born of the moral and spiritual circumstances of a given situation. Mr. A. C. Benson says of Ruskin that "In one respect his upbringing was ascetic. He had very few toys, he had to learn to amuse himself on the simplest lines; he was roundly whipped whenever he was naughty or wilful, and he was sheltered to an extraordinary extent from all external influences."[2] But this is clearly a loose and inaccurate use of the term. When restraint is externally imposed and there

secondly, "a peculiar kind of suffering and asceticism which results to a profoundly sensitive, absorbedly religious soul from the conviction of the qualitative, absolute difference between God and all that we ourselves can think, feel, will or be"; and thirdly, "the Discipline of fleeing and of facing the Multiple and Contingent." "The larger Asceticism will thus turn out to be a wider and deeper means towards perfection than even genuine Mysticism itself, since this Asceticism will have to include both this Mysticism and the counter movement within the one simple disciplined and purified life of the soul" (p. 251).

[1] In his Bampton Lectures, *Christian Ethics*, p. 371 f., Dr. T. B. Strong says, "That the Christian ideal is ascetic in this sense—in the sense that it involves a voluntary withdrawal from individual separateness, and a voluntary entering into the whole condition of the world—would, I suppose, hardly be denied by any one. It does not seek for pain, as such, but it is contented to accept it—more than contented to endure it, sacrificially, for the sake of others. . . . Such asceticism is really only the practical expression of that which all Christian men profess."

[2] *Ruskin: A Study in Personality*, p. 15.

is no suggestion of a responsive acceptance, to speak of asceticism is to introduce an idea which is wanting to the situation. This is not to say that asceticism and compulsion are wholly incompatible. Ascetic practice is very far from being merely the due performance of an artificially contrived set of exercises. Every situation in which men are required to endure hardship and to suffer may be made an occasion of asceticism: but it can be so treated only by whole-hearted adoption, that is to say by a willing response which appropriates the compulsory and the inevitable and transmutes it into a voluntary activity. Every humbling limitation and crippling infirmity of life may thus be used by the ascetic in his work of active obedience to the claims of the moral and spiritual order; and it is given to him to transform a life of obligatory servitude into a daily tribute of free service gladly rendered, by such ascetic response.

So far, then, asceticism is seen to be a voluntary activity in which the soul of man endeavours to effect its release, or to prepare for and to find satisfying self-expression in its relations with others. Resting on a multiform religious or ethical foundation, it comprises diverse types of moral and spiritual enterprise: but, though wide in its scope, it is legitimately known by the one name, which carries with it no more danger of confusion than such terms as prayer and sacrifice; for each type is readily distinguished by adjectival qualification, and is to be estimated on its own merits.

3

The people who are commonly regarded as exponents of asceticism are naturally the professionals—monks and nuns, faqirs and sadhus, bhikkhus and yogis, and all others who have turned aside from the common life of men to live as solitaries or to share in the ordered life of cœnobite communities. The non-professional, who does not thus withdraw himself from the world, attracts less attention than the professional, and, indeed, is not generally recognised as a member of the brotherhood. Yet the ascetic ranks include a vast army of evangelists, doctors, social workers, and other noble spirits belonging to no particular category, who, in response to a call, have bravely surrendered wealth, and independence, and personal comfort, and have yielded themselves without reserve to the task of shouldering a part of the burden of the human family.

In his efforts to assert the supremacy of the moral and spiritual order, the ascetic, whether professional or non-professional, has to deal with a phenomenal world which centres in his own bodily life. He therefore undertakes the regulation of his body and all its powers in all their use of those things for which they have an appetite; and his method consists largely of restriction, surrender, renunciation. In self-discipline or spiritual purgation, penitence or altruism, or in whatever type of moral and spiritual adventure it may be that claims his attention, he cuts himself off from things and experiences which it is open to him to enjoy if he will; or he sets himself to adapt to their highest possibilities the limitations and disabilities which have been imposed upon him. "To minimize wants, to reduce material resources, to simplify life all round, of luxuries to make a clean sweep—this is the way of the ascetic." [1]

The body requires food and drink, exercise, rest, and some measure of comfort, in the interests of its preservation and general well-being; and it is instinctively prompted to beget its kind. Asceticism involves the refusal of satisfaction to these natural desires, partially or absolutely, temporarily or permanently.

Abstinence and fasting are by far the commonest of all ascetic practices. In the latter case there is a complete rejection of every form of nourishment for a given time: in the former the abstention is from particular kinds of food and drink, especially flesh and wine, though for widely diverse reasons most kinds of food are refused at some time or other. Dainties and all pleasant foods are specially liable to rejection; and with some ascetics the scope of this category is enlarged to such an extent that no food seems too poor to be included. Life is maintained almost by the mere will to live, and man's capacity for endurance is found to be truly wonderful.

The contradiction of the appetite for healthy exercise is accomplished by the selection of a restricted area within which to move, and an enfeebling inactivity is endured for years in some cases within the narrow confines of a court-yard, a cell, a cave, a tomb, or even on the top of a pillar. Non-professional ascetics forgo legitimate opportunities of recreation by the voluntary acceptance of conditions of life

[1] J. MacCunn, *Ethics of Citizenship*, p. 205.

which make no provision for such relief or at best admit of a brief yearly holiday.

Rest and comfort are surrendered by the rejection of civilisation's many softnesses, in favour of such practices as the use of hard chairs without cushions, sleeping on boards, and dispensing with a fire in winter. The hours of sleep are curtailed ; sleep is deliberately interrupted, or made unrestful by the adoption of a sitting posture ; and vigils or night-watches are observed, when sleep is altogether abandoned. The body is sometimes denied the comfort of cleanliness ; it is scantily clad or even left entirely nude ; and in this condition it is driven out of its customary shelter and exposed to the most inclement weather, lest it should prove luxurious.

The sexual appetite is held in check by a self-imposed continence on the part of ascetics who have entered the married state ; and vows of celibacy are observed by large numbers of virgin men and women who have found their vocation in a loneliness sometimes shadowed by visions of dream-children, but for the most part bright with the joy of a great surrender. Life itself is yielded by some, either by a sudden act of heroic generosity, or by the still more costly way of gradual relinquishment. This noble consummation of self-denial is made on the battlefield, in the slum, in the infectious ward, in the leper colony, in the haunts of heathenism, and in every other place where human beings are living in peril.

In addition to this ascetic ordering of the mainly physical demands of the body, it is found necessary to regulate the expression of the gregarious instinct and such fundamental tendencies as those of play, self-assertion, pugnacity, and acquisitiveness. These prompt to the satisfaction that is found in amusement and pleasurable excitement, social intercourse, possessions, independence, achievement, and the exercise of power. The activities suggested by the instinct for play are denied by a more or less rigid sabbatarianism, marking special days and seasons by a studied seriousness ; or a general puritanism is observed, forbidding indulgence in dancing, card-playing, theatre-going, and all such amusements, at any time. Social intercourse is limited by various means of seclusion and appointed times of silence, the proscription ranging through every stage intermediate between an unwillingness to dine out on Friday, and the hermit's complete and permanent separation from

his fellow-men; and again, from the silence of a brief "retreat" to an unbroken silence for the greater part of a long lifetime. Frequently it happens that the sacrifice thus made is greatly increased by the necessity involved for breaking close family ties and strong friendships.

Since the satisfaction of possession is commonly allied to an æsthetic appreciation of fine things, the ascetic dispenses with ornaments of dress and with luxury of every kind. He reduces his belongings, sometimes to a bare minimum, and is even found making absolute surrender of every particle of property and going forth to a life of utter poverty, trusting to the providence of God and the charity of man.

He struggles against irritability, bad temper, passionate anger, pride of place, and all ambitious self-seeking; and his devices for the practice of humility are legion. Self-restraint and self-humiliation are practised in every conceivable form, from the pre-arranged provocation of a student monk by the occasional intrusion of a brother willing to help him to self-control and sweetness of temper, up to the unqualified obedience and subjection required by a strict community life. At its lowest this means a practised alertness in the cause of self-government; in its highest form it means the renunciation of every distinction save that of holiness.

While all this negative action necessarily imposes hardship, and some of it is carried out with harshness and rigour, there is further a positive undertaking of suffering and toil which sometimes proceeds to an extreme degree of severity. The ascetic compels his body to undergo arduous and irksome labours both for its own good and for the profit of his fellows. He practises toilsome exercises whose sole purpose is to provide varied means of expending energy, and adequate tests of endurance: or he spends himself in the performance of heavy and perhaps distasteful work in the relief of the poor, the sick, and any others whom he may find himself able to assist. By the very intensity of his spiritual desire he masters the weariness of his body, and he does not hesitate to spur it on to the point of complete exhaustion.

In the attempt to discipline the body or to purge it from evil by the infliction of pain, ill-regulated zeal and the incitement of rivalry sometimes unite to produce an astounding variety of savage practices. The poor body

is tortured and mutilated in brutal fashion; and there is little doubt that these revolting practices are commonly allowed to divert attention from the less ferocious aspects of asceticism, and are mainly responsible for the prejudice that attaches to the term in the minds of many people. The body is clothed with hair shirts, with nail-studded belts, and with massive iron chains dragging heavy weights; the feet are shod with shoes bristling inside with pointed nails; the whole body is laid out on a bed of thorns or of iron spikes; the soles of the feet are torn by progress over sharp flints, or burnt by live charcoal; small fires are lighted in a circle round the body, or it is made to swing before a fire while the tropical sun blazes overhead; the body is suspended head downwards from a tree for perhaps half an hour, or it is hung up by hooks fastened into the flesh; long pilgrimages are performed by painful modes of progression; standing upright is tabued for years together; a stream of water is allowed to trickle on the head; the head is violently beaten against a wall until it bleeds profusely; thick metal skewers are run through the tongue, the cheeks, and various parts of the body; flagellation and blood-letting are practised with every degree of severity; the body is branded, cut with knives, and mutilated: the skull, the teeth, the ears, and the feet, are deformed; the hand is clenched until it becomes useless, the nails making their way through the flesh between the bones of the hand; an arm is tied to a bamboo support and kept erect overhead until it withers and becomes rigid; and, as a climax, the body is buried alive for periods extending from a few days to five or six weeks.

In the higher life of the spirit also the ascetic adds strenuous toil to the suffering that is imposed by renunciation, meeting enticements to spiritual sloth by the assiduous practice of prayer, contemplation, and study. There is an obligatory performance of prolonged public and private worship, embracing the repeated use of litanies and other devotional exercises, frequent recitation of sacred scriptures, the recitation of names of the Deity, and the meritorious reiteration of certain invocations and sacred formulas. Much time is spent in searching self-examination; and meditation is practised according to a wide variety of methods, ranging from the chiefly physical exercise of holding the breath or gazing long at a fixed point in order to induce

a kind of trance or "inspired" condition, up to the wholly spiritual communion of the Christian saint with his Redeemer. Intensive systematic study is pursued within restricted limits, and generally includes the memorising of extensive portions of sacred literature.

Such a summary may well seem to establish the truth of the popular idea that asceticism denotes self-inflicted suffering of marked severity or even a blind cult of pain. As Dr. Inge says, "When people speak of 'asceticism,' they have in their minds such severe 'buffeting' of the body as was practised by many ancient hermits and mediæval monks." [1] The Oxford English Dictionary recognises this by defining asceticism as "rigorous self-discipline, severe abstinence, austerity," terms which plainly require that, whatever the prompting and purpose of the discipline, it may not be held to constitute asceticism unless it is characterised by severity. Asceticism thus comes to be regarded as an activity based on the conviction that suffering is a virtue in itself—the state of mind which Mr. Bernard Shaw has derided as "thinking you are moral when you are uncomfortable." [2]

So long as the majority of men are content to lead lives untouched by any self-imposed systematic disciplinary control, asceticism will continue to suggest to them the idea of severity, by contrast; and this idea is strengthened

[1] *Christian Mysticism*, p. 11.

[2] An article in *The Churchman*, February, 1910, gives clear expression to this view of asceticism. "The essence of the ascetic idea is this—that the salutary effects of physical hardship upon the human spirit are so great that abstinence from things that enter into the life of the world is itself a profitable exercise."

The Moral Ideal, by J. Wedgwood, offers a somewhat imaginative presentation of the same view (p. 77 f.). "Confronted with an eclipse we know that the dark body gives us the position of the hidden light. The obstacle, could we pierce it, would become a gateway. Asceticism is this conviction in practice. With this confidence the ascetic flings himself on Pain as on the barrier that hides the Divine; he seeks God on the other side of that which blots out His light. For pain hides God, for the moment, as even sin does not hide Him; and in the point of uttermost resistance the ascetic discovers the magnet of a final victory. He feels the recoil of the flesh an inverted guide to the home of the spirit, and plunging into the flood which drowns natural desire, trusts to emerge in a triumph of that which is above nature. And if his trust were altogether vain, we cannot think that his faith would be as long lived as it has proved itself."

by the fact that attention is usually fixed on professional ascetics of an extreme type. But a more exact use of the term cannot require the recognition of rigour as a determining factor. The popular notion that asceticism stands only for rigorous self-discipline, and not for its milder forms, fails to take account of the fact that small acts of self-denial, while they differ from more costly acts in degree, are not different in kind; that, considering the diversity of men, there can be no universal standard by which to appraise this as easy and that as laborious; and that an unnecessary difficulty is created in the need thus established for a dividing line; for, when all the practices have been satisfactorily graded, where exactly does self-denial become asceticism?

Again, there are those for whom the distinctive characteristic of asceticism is to be found in its negativity. These represent it as essentially a process of self-denial, repression, exhaustion, and eradication, which, whatever the original intention with which disciplinary measures were initiated, has no longer any objective outside itself. Dr. E. Caird, for example, considers that "It is not easy to answer the charge brought against the Stoics that, after all, they were merely ascetics; in other words, that their morality not only begins with the mortification of the passions, but ends there." [1] But, while it is true that, just as there are fanatical ascetics who devote themselves to the practice of self-torture, so there are ascetics who ceaselessly pursue a negative, and therefore hopeless, ideal, this does not justify the restriction of the term *asceticism* to phases which are in the nature of exaggerations and perversions of that

[1] *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, ii. p. 125. Similarly Dr. J. S. Mackenzie says, in his *Manual of Ethics*, p. 283, "It is important to repress our lower desires, in order that we may be able to devote ourselves, without let or impediment, to the highest ends of life. But the ascetic regards the suppression of desire as the end in itself."

The same opinion is expressed by Dr. J. Clark Murray in his *Handbook of Christian Ethics*, p. 308. "The sacrifice of any pleasure whatever its nature may be, comes to be thought of as virtuous in itself without reference to the end which it is designed to serve. By the same process of thought, pleasure in general is at last viewed as evil, and total abstinence from it is made the prominent feature of a virtuous character. This is the phase of morality commonly understood by the name of asceticism."

for which the word more properly stands.[1] The ascetic who is obsessed with the idea of freeing his spirit from his body will inevitably practise a negative asceticism; and the ascetic who seeks to control his body as an important contributory factor in the development of the spiritual life may become so wholly absorbed in the work of self-training by means of renunciation as to forget the goal towards which he first directed his efforts; but there is also asceticism in which, by methods both positive and negative, a truly positive aim is consistently pursued, and the process is never regarded as more than a means to an end.[2]

To sum up, asceticism must be held to include legitimate self-discipline, as well as bodily purgation based on a materialistic conception of evil; it may be regarded as a means of self-adjustment in the attempt to establish an ideal system of relationships, as well as direct striving for self-development; it covers varying degrees of stringency of practice, and may not be restricted to types which are characterised by undue severity, by a false estimate of suffering, or by sheer negativity. It is a widely inclusive term, covering practices good and bad, noble and debased, heroic and foolish; and may be described as the voluntary practice of renunciation, suffering, and toil, for the deliverance and protection of the soul from defilement, for the increase of its powers by the discharge of its proper functions in accordance with its own conception of the moral and spiritual order, and for the consequent achievement and enjoyment of its full status.

[1] Solovyof rightly describes this as *false* asceticism. "If the suppression of the flesh is taken not as a means for good or evil but as an end in itself, we get a peculiar kind of false asceticism which identifies flesh with the physical body, and considers every bodily torment a virtue. Although this false asceticism of self-laceration has no evil purpose to begin with, in its further development it easily becomes an evil: it either proves to be a slow suicide or becomes a peculiar kind of sensuality." *The Justification of the Good*, p. 58.

[2] *Cf.* L. S. Thornton, *Conduct and the Supernatural*, p. 263 f. "It is no mere mania of destruction which the ascetic principle inculcates. It is rather that spirit of independence which enables a man to hold the pruning knife in readiness, to be used or not as the other worldly values direct, but to be used unhesitatingly when spiritual interests require it."

CHAPTER II

THE PLACE OF ASCETICISM IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

I

THE early stages of man's social, moral, and religious history are now generally believed to be portrayed with considerable fidelity in the lives of existing peoples of the lower culture,[1] who, though they belong to all of the four different stocks of the human family and are found in every continent,[2] exhibit such a measure of

[1] *Cf.* W. Bousset, *What is Religion?* p. 29 f. As Mgr. Le Roy says, *La Religion des Primitifs*, p. 42, " Ils ne nous représentent sans doute pas exactement l'humanité telle quelle fut à son origine ; mais, de tous les peuples qui la composent, ce sont eux, néanmoins, qui paraissent en donner la plus fidèle image."

J. G. Frazer utters a necessary warning in connection with the use of the word " primitive," in *Psyche's Task*, p. 163. " Compared with man in his absolutely pristine state even the lowest savage of to-day is doubtless a highly developed and cultured being, since all evidence and all probability are in favour of the view that every existing race of men, the rudest as well as the most civilised, has reached its present level of culture, whether it be high or low, only after a slow and painful progress upwards, which must have extended over many thousands, perhaps millions, of years. Therefore when we speak of any human savages as primitive, which the usage of the English language permits us to do, it should always be remembered that we apply the term primitive to them in a relative, not in an absolute sense."

[2] *Cf.* Goblet d'Alviella in *Trans. of the Third Inter. Cong. for the Hist. of Rel.*, ii. 367. " Les populations non-civilisées du globe se partagent en un certain nombre de groupes ethniques dont il convient d'étudier successivement les manifestations religieuses. On ne peut mieux faire, à cet égard, que d'adopter la classification proposée par Albert Réville dans son ouvrage sur les religions des non-civilisés.

I. Les Noirs d'Afrique :
   (*a*) Nègres, (*b*) Cafres, (*c*) Hottentots, (*d*) Bosshimans.
II. Les autochthones des Deux Amériques :
   (*a*) Esquimaux, (*b*) Peaux-Rouges, (*c*) Caraibes, (*b*) Tribus brésiliennes, (*e*) Gaycourous et Abipones, (*f*) Charruas et Puelches, (*g*) Patagons, (*h*) Fuégiens, (*i*) Araucans.

uniformity in their religious practices and conceptions that they admit of combined treatment far more readily than those whose religious development has borne them along in many different directions. To claim that the beginnings of asceticism are to be found among these peoples is almost certainly to draw the objection that "asceticism proper belongs only to an age of reflexion." [1] In exactly the same way it was the fashion not long since to deny to them either morality or religion in any real sense; but these are now seen to be terms that necessarily cover a long series of developing stages, and the same must hold good for asceticism. As Dr. G. Galloway says, speaking of moral development, "The process of growth from the lower to the higher is continuous, and to draw a dividing line at a given point is an arbitrary procedure." [2] Not only is asceticism to be thought of as moral and spiritual self-adjustment rather than as a merely self-regarding discipline, a change of view which of itself justifies our carrying the term back to those stages of man's moral development which preceded his consciously and deliberately taking himself in hand; but there is further the fact that, even in the higher culture, asceticism is by no means invariably to be conceived as based mainly on reflexion. On the contrary it frequently exhibits a very considerable element of spontaneity. It may be largely a matter of unconsidered self-expression, the outcome of life clamouring for expansion, the product of a

III. Les Océaniens :
(*a*) Polynésiens, (*b*) Melanésiens, (*c*) Micronésiens, (*d*) Australiens, (*e*) Tasmaniens, (*f*) Dayaks et Andamans, (*g*) Madécasses.
IV. Les Finno-Tartares :
(*a*) Sibériens, (*b*) Lapons et Finnois.
Peut-être conviendrait-il d'ajouter deux subdivisions, comprenant l'une les sauvages de l'Inde et de l'Indo-Chine, l'autre les Aïnos du Japon."

[1] T. C. Hall in E.R.E., ii. 64. "The classes of customs gathered by Zöckler (*Askese und Mönchthum*, 1897, pp. 78–97) are almost without exception symbolic substitutes for outgrown customs, or they have social and legal significance apart from any true ascetic motive." And on p. 65, "It is, to say the least, doubtful if, outside of the highest civilisation, asceticism in the strict sense of either discipline or negation of the bodily desires can be shown anywhere."

Similarly J. G. Frazer, in *The Golden Bough*, x. 65 f., says that "asceticism, under any shape or form, is never primitive"; but he explains that by asceticism he means "pain for the sake of pain."

[2] *The Prin. of Rel. Development*, p. 224.

personality surging up in an insistent claim to fulfil itself. Quickened by some secret impulse from within or reacting to the suggestion of some external stimulus, the ascetic is often moved to a strenuous activity without real consideration of the course he follows, or careful calculation of the results to be obtained. And the ascetic who gropes blindly after a hidden objective is not to be denied the closest kinship with his more enlightened fellow, who, for all his powers of vision and system of operation, is yet experimenting with life, and by a vital process seeking more than he knows.[1]

Examining the religions of the lower culture with these considerations in mind, we find in them the beginnings of both vocational asceticism, or the asceticism of those who have been called to a special way of life, and that institutional or group asceticism which is rooted in the corporate and ordinary life of the people, and is here associated especially with the observance of tabus, the surrender of sacrificial offerings, and the practice of *rites de passage* for the successful accomplishment of changes of status.

In Australia and Asia, Africa and America, as well as in the Pacific, whence the general name for this system of prohibitions was taken, all primitive peoples practise "the most rudimentary form of asceticism—the abstinence from foods which are supposed to be *tabu*." [2] Some foods are forbidden to all, some only to special classes or individuals; some are permanently denied, others only temporarily; but, however desirable the food that is thus "specially marked" as being mysteriously dangerous, it is as a rule strictly avoided by those to whom it is forbidden, for fear of the unknown evil that would result if the tabu were ignored. And, as Dr. J. A. Macculloch says, "Whatever be the reason for a food-tabu, it argues considerable self-restraint, akin to the restraint which desires to discipline the body through

[1] *Cf.* R. R. Marett in E.R.E. xii. 184 f. "On all sides, so far as the influence of a philosophy of man makes itself felt, there is of late manifested a deeper interest in the emotional life, more especially as it relates to conduct. Alike in social psychology with its study of the crowd and in individual psychology with its doctrine of the subconscious, the conviction is growing that society and mind alike are controlled from below, as it were, as well as from above—that reason is at best a constitutional ruler whose authority rests not on force but on consent."

[2] W. R. Inge, *The Phil. of Plotinus*, ii. 166.

fasting among peoples of a higher culture." [1] Though tribal authority exerts a strong compulsion, disobedience is nevertheless possible; and, since obedience is rendered to an authority which is supported by the religious emotion of the individual, the response is such as to justify its description as rudimentary asceticism.

Similarly among these peoples a clear anticipation of the continence which is an important part of the higher asceticism is found in the practice of tabuing sexual intercourse during war, a practically universal custom, and frequently, though less generally, before and during hunting and fishing expeditions. The feeling which prompts this restraint is probably compounded of a sense of avoidance of soul-enfeeblement by contact [2] and a vaguer sense of securing by non-interference the co-operation, or at least the neutrality, of the hidden power that governs life. The spirit controls the body in an act of renunciation in order to preserve its own vitality and to guard itself from hostile influence; and that is asceticism.

The second occasion for asceticism in the lower culture is the sacrificial offering of food and other possessions to the gods and spirits, in order to enter into communion with them, or to purchase their goodwill, or to pay them lawful homage, or to invite their attention to the self-denial that is being practised by their suppliants.[3] There is scope here for serious renunciation, especially in the matter of food, and if asceticism is to be understood as a costly adjustment of moral and spiritual relationship as well as direct self-training, it is clear that the sacrificial system involves primitive

[1] E.R.E. ii. 230.

[2] J. G. Frazer says (*The Golden Bough*, ii. 164): "Why exactly so many savages have made it a rule to refrain from women in time of war, we cannot say for certain, but we may conjecture that their motive was a superstitious fear lest, on the principle of sympathetic magic, close contact with women should infect them with feminine weakness and cowardice."

[3] If to Tylor's suggested classification (*Prim. Culture*, ii. 375 f.), "The ruder conception that the deity takes and values the offering for itself, gives place on the one hand to the idea of mere homage expressed by a gift, and on the other to the negative view that the virtue lies in the worshipper depriving himself of something prized," W. Robertson Smith's theory of sacramental sacrifice be added, we have almost certainly the four main conceptions underlying this universal practice.

worshippers in a very considerable measure of rudimentary [1] ascetic self-denial. The advance of civilisation enables many to forget the strength of the animal lust that is in them, by reason of the provision that is made for the production and the regular distribution of food, and by the refinements that are devised for its preparation and consumption; but, as we have recently seen, the standards of well-being that are enjoyed by civilised communities in times of peace are liable to be suddenly cancelled in times of stress and disorder, elemental values re-assert themselves speedily and strongly, and civilised Europeans find themselves engaged in competition for bodily sustenance as keenly if not as barbarously as the rudest of their ancestors. The exigencies of war have revealed to us the dread urgency of the food-problem as it commonly presented itself to the men of earlier days; and the volume of sacrifice offered by primitive peoples, however mistaken their reading of the situation that seemed to them to require the offerings, is a remarkable testimony to their capacity for ascetic renunciation in deference to supernatural requirements.

The discipline that is imposed and accepted as a preparation for initiation to a new group, chiefly at puberty or on admission to a secret society, provides the third occasion for primitive asceticism of the institutional type. Candidates are required to live for some time in isolation, to practise fasting, and, frequently, to submit to flagellation and mutilation, in addition to undergoing a course of instruction relative to the position they seek. Purification enters largely into this discipline, and the idea of training, schooling, and imparting of strength is also prominent; and under both heads the renunciation practised and the suffering endured must be regarded as ascetic, since they are largely governed by moral and spiritual sanctions.

By means of these three customs everywhere observed among them, the peoples of the lower culture are committed to no small measure of that group asceticism which is strictly observed where the corporate life is strong, and tends to grow lax and perfunctory only at higher levels when the corporate sense is weakened. On the other hand, vocational asceticism, which, requiring a more developed sense of individuality,

[1] "Rudimentary" not because of the degree of renunciation, but because of the quality of the moral and spiritual relationship in connection with which the renunciation is practised.

flourishes among peoples of the higher culture, is naturally far less prominent among primitive peoples. There, however, it occurs in the case of all medicine-men, shamans, magicians, and priests, who are not of the impulsive, ecstatic type, but regular officials. In most tribes these professionals are trained from youth, sometimes even from infancy, spending lengthy periods in retirement, fasting, and receiving instruction: admission to office is commonly by a special initiatory ceremony; and after this a strictly disciplined life is often expected, food restrictions of various kinds being imposed by special tabus, fasting being necessary before approaching gods or spirits, and continence, in addition, being sometimes required. As R. R. Marett points out, the many restrictions attending the life of the primitive priest are such as to promote in him a strong sense of the connection between self-discipline and the higher spiritual levels of man's life and to develop in him a deeper appreciation of his individual and spiritual nature.[1] Thus his practice tends to approximate closely to the unmistakable asceticism of the higher culture, and H. Jacobi is fully justified in asserting that "Ascetic practices form already an important part of primitive religion, and are imposed as a duty on the shamans and medicine-men of uncivilised peoples."[2]

Before passing to the consideration of the two main courses of ascetic development in the historic religions, it is necessary to notice three separate pairs of geographically contiguous religions which stand higher than the religions of the lower culture, but make no clear contribution to the streams referred to. These are the Celtic and Teutonic religions, the Mexican and Peruvian, and the Babylonian and Assyrian. In the first case the remarkable development of monastic activity among Celtic Christians has suggested the existence of a strong ascetic bias among the Celts in pre-Christian days; but nothing has been revealed which confirms this. Such asceticism as there was among them and the Teutons does not appear to differ from the rudimentary

[1] E.R.E. xii. 183 f. "The *mana* to be conserved is just that part of a man that he feels to be most worth the saving—the will for power. Such power may be coveted for temporal ends. Savage shepherds of the people are not more distinguished than the rest of their kind. But at least it is proximately envisaged as a spiritual power. At least it is the sort of power that comes with and after self-abnegation and the exercise of humility."

[2] E.R.E. ii. 801.

asceticism of primitive peoples dealt with above. Among the Mexicans and the Peruvians, commonly associated in this way though in fact each people was ignorant of the very existence of the other, a high standard of civilisation was reached, and with it there went a correspondingly developed degree of personal religion. Costly sacrifice and penance entered largely into the practice of the people; women lived as nuns in a strict form of conventual life; and the priesthood was a severely arduous calling.[1] As to the Babylonians and Assyrians, "the entire history of Sumerian and Babylonian religion, extending over a period of three thousand years, contains in the public services a dominant note of penance and fear of the gods."[2] This would appear to have involved not only the renunciation of sacrificial offerings, but more especially the self-humiliation of confession, the spiritual exercise of an extended use of penitential prayers and hymns, and much fasting.

2

The history of asceticism in the higher religions falls into two main sections, the first of which shows India as a forcing-house and distributing centre for the religions of the East, while in the second the Mediterranean lands, and especially Egypt, are seen as a generating and receiving area containing the various streams which make their contribution to the history of Christianity, and later to that of Islam.

From earliest Vedic times India has practised the institutional asceticism of renunciation through the ceaseless offering of sacrifice, together with lavish provision for temple worship and the liberal support of "holy men"; as also, since the time when the caste system became firmly established, it has strictly enforced the ascetic observance of many irksome tabus. But it is in respect of vocational asceticism

[1] *Cf.* L. Spence, *The Mythologies of Ancient Mexico and Peru*, p. 31 f. "The life of an Aztec priest was rigorous in the extreme. Fasting and penance bulked largely among his duties, and the idea of the implacability of the gods which was current in the priesthood appears to have driven many priests to great extremes of self-inflicted torture. . . . Some of their orders permitted marriage, while others were celibate, but all, without distinction, passed an existence of severe asceticism."

[2] S. Langdon in *Trans. of the Third Internat. Cong. for Rel.*, i. 249.

that it has shown itself pre-eminent, for the unfailing persistency with which it has produced generation after generation of specialist ascetics, for the severity of the self-torturing austerities which they have practised, and for the success with which it has transmitted to lands of widely diverse character, south and east and north, a lasting impulse to asceticism as a way of life.

The very limited asceticism found among the cognate Iranians, together with the complete absence of gloom in the Vedic hymns, has suggested to some that the Aryan invaders brought no asceticism with them when they entered India, but that they subsequently learned it from the aboriginal peoples they found there.[1] It must be admitted that, as L. de la Vallée Poussin says,[2] "This aristocracy was likely to borrow from the aborigines, and from the mass of the Aryan people in daily contact with the aborigines, many superstitions or beliefs—confused notions connected with penance, ecstasy, reincarnations, as well as the principle of *ahimsa*, 'respect for life'; a sort of cult of the cow; new gods, obscene and cruel; phallic worship; idolatry, and so on. Such notions, it is certain they borrowed: this can be proved in many cases." Yet the word *tapas*, which came to be generally used for all bodily asceticism, is found in the Vedas [3] as well as in the Brahmanas, both in its literal sense of "warmth" or "glow," and in the sense of "voluntary suffering"; and, in the light of subsequent history, it seems reasonable to suppose that, whatever contribution the Indian tribes may have made to the development of asceticism among their conquerors, that development was but the issue of an already existing tendency.

At any rate from very early days after their occupation of the north-western part of the land, there were to be found among them ascetics who strove to win magical power by means of fasting and bodily pain. And "by the time of the oldest Upanishad texts the ascetic life has already been elevated into a special 'calling,' which assumes equal rank by the side of the position of householder." [4] For men had

[1] *Cf.* J. H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 146. "Our Aryan blood was not responsible for a phenomenon safely to be credited to the indigenous population."

[2] *The Way to Nirvana*, p. 17.

[3] See Rigveda, x. 109, 4; 154, 2; 167, 1.

[4] P. Deussen, *The Phil. of the Upanishads*, p. 67.

begun to go forth in considerable numbers to live as hermits (*vanaprasthas*, or forest-dwellers, they were called), dwelling in rude huts and practising the utmost simplicity in their manner of life. A little later the ideal way is presented as a series of four stages of *asrama*, or "religious mortification," as follows: "When the period of Brahman-studentship is ended, a man becomes a householder; after he has been a householder, he becomes an anchorite; after he has been an anchorite, let him travel about on pilgrimage." [1] Thus to the third stage, that of the *vanaprastha*, has been added that of the *sannyasi*,[2] or "renouncer," who wanders from place to place, without home or possession of any kind, seeking to gain his end sometimes by the old way of austerities, sometimes by the newer way of the *yogi*, the way of knowledge and illumination.

Largely as a protest against the arrogance of the Brahmans in reserving to their own caste the privilege of admission to the ascetic orders,[3] new doctrines were formulated in the 6th century B.C., which produced important modifications in the practice of those orders. Mahavira, known as the Jina, or conqueror, is not so certainly to be regarded as a religious founder as is his contemporary Gautama, the Buddha, or enlightened one; but, whether his teaching was original or only a transmission of the thoughts of some who preceded him, the Jains are content to owe their name to him and to look to him as their head. His followers were persuaded by him to adopt a decided intensification of the customary ascetic practices, while the teaching of Gautama, on the contrary, exercised a greatly moderating influence in this respect, dispensing with all forms of bodily torture; but they agreed in establishing in their separate communities a monastic order open to all castes and to both sexes,[4] in which scope might be found for the full practice of the systems they taught, the laity

[1] *Jabala Upanishad*, 4.

[2] Known also as *parivrajaka* (wanderer), and *bhikshu* (beggar).

[3] See Hoernle, *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, 1898, pp. 39 ff., cited by W. Crooke, E.R.E. vi. 694; also Mrs. S. Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 3.

[4] Mahavira made definite provision for nuns and laywomen, though the Digambaras now deny the hope of salvation to a woman. Gautama only reluctantly consented to the inclusion of women, and declared that it would halve the length of the life of his system. See H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 447.

being bound by a less exacting code, and being required to maintain the monks. Rest-houses were provided for the use of the monks during the rainy season, but at a later date it became the practice, especially with the Buddhists, to make prolonged visits to these houses at all times of the year.

For some sixteen centuries Brahmanism, Jainism, and Buddhism existed side by side in India, and continued to produce their separate types of vocational ascetics. But, in spite of the growth of differences of opinion among the Buddhists concerning the strictness of the life to which they were called, as well as on doctrinal matters, Buddhism flourished beyond its two competitors to such an extent as to suggest that it was destined entirely to supersede them. In the 3rd century B.C., under the great Buddhist monarch Asoka, it entered on a remarkable career of missionary expansion beyond the borders of India, to be noted later; and during the first four centuries of the Christian era, largely through the support given to it by Kaniska, the most famous ruler of the newly-established Indo-Scythian empire in the north-west of India, it became the religion of the great majority of the Indian peoples, and its monastic order grew proportionately strong in numbers. A process of internal decay seems then to have set in, however, and from the 8th to the 11th century this was assisted by a revival of Brahmanism, so that when the Muslims entered India Buddhism showed no powers of resistance, but entirely disappeared before them, leaving its subsequent history to be traced in other lands.

Meanwhile the Jain community had gradually separated into two rival sections, the final separation taking place towards the end of the 1st century A.D.; and in this condition they have continued down to the present day, when about a million and a half of them are to be found scattered throughout India, the *Digambaras* (Sky-clothed) being met with chiefly in the south, where their nude ascetics are confined to the jungle, while the *Svetambaras* (White-clothed) have their headquarters in Gujarat and western Rajputana, and are found all over northern and central India.[1]

In its triumphant reaction against Buddhism and

[1] A third sect, the Sthanakavasi, "differ very little from the Svetambara sect out of which they sprang, often calling themselves Sthanakavasi Svetambara." Mrs. S. Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, p. 88.

Jainism, Brahmanism became transformed into modern Hinduism, with its two main divisions, Saivism and Vaisnavism, both of which have continued to produce various ascetic orders.[1] "The development of asceticism in its coarser forms is one of the main contributions of Saivism to modern Hinduism."[2] Siva is himself conceived as an ascetic who for many thousands of years has practised extremest austerities, and his worshippers go to great lengths in their endeavours to imitate him. Chief among them are the *Sannyasis*, or Renouncers; the *Dandis*, who carry a *danda* (staff), and are the most reputable of the sectarian Saivas; the *Paramahamsas*, who constitute a specially strict and select body, to which members are admitted only after a probation of not less than twelve years in one of the other sects, and in which each member is held to be already one with the Divine Spirit; the *Lingaits*, an important puritan order of good repute, found in the south, especially on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts; and the *Aghoris*, who are a repulsive sect, fortunately small in number, associated specially with Mt. Abu.

The Vaisnavas, or worshippers of Vishnu, have three important ascetic orders. In the Deccan there are the *Sri Vaisnavas;* in South India generally the *Madhavas;* and in the north the *Ramanandis*, who are also known as *Bairagis*, that is, those who have subdued all earthly desires. These last are an extremely flourishing sect, dating from the early years of the 14th century, when they were founded by Ramananda.

Sikhism, which dates from the end of the following century, has also given rise to various mendicant orders, three of which are important to-day, namely, the *Udasis*, those who show grief and dejection, the *Nirmalas*, or Puritans, and the fanatical *Akalis* (Immortals), otherwise known as *Nihangs*, who are the zealots among the Sikhs.

It is estimated that these professional ascetics, Jains, Saivas, Vaisnavas, and Sikhs, number about five millions at the present day. They are to be found in every part of India; they include both men and women,[3] though the

[1] For many interesting details see J. C. Oman, *Mystics, Ascetics, and Saints of India.*

[2] W. Crooke in E.R.E. vi.701.

[3] Sadhu and sadhvi are the general terms.

latter are not numerous; and, while admission to certain sects is restricted to the higher castes, they are drawn from practically all classes. Wholly naked and smeared with ash, or scantily and variously clad, for the salmon-coloured robes are not universal, equipped with begging-bowl and staff, fire-tongs and rosary, and, frequently, with pipe, pestle, and mortar, they wander from place to place, favouring especially those localities in which fairs are being held. During the monsoons they retire to the numerous rest-houses or monasteries which have been provided by the people. Their day's work includes the collection of food from their supporters, to whom they are expected to go, twice daily as a rule, after the regular meal-hours, so as to take only from their leavings; the performance of various forms of meditation; and the occasional demonstration of the possession of special powers by the subjection of the body to some form of torture. Celibacy is not universal among them, but it is usual.

Turning back now to the 3rd century B.C., the point at which Buddhism began to spread to other lands, we see it crossing over first of all to Ceylon in the south. Some uncertainty exists as to the date of its introduction into that country, but there appears to be no good reason for doubting the truth of the record contained in the Sinhalese Chronicle, the Mahavansa, which attributes the coming of Buddhism to Asoka himself (king of Magadha from about 270 B.C. to about 232 B.C.), who is said to have sent his own son Mahendra to Ceylon as a missionary.[1] The island was peopled at that time by the aboriginal Veddas and by the descendants of settlers who had crossed from the mainland in the 6th century B.C.; Buddhism was established among them, and remains there to-day practically unchanged. The sangha, or monastic order, flourished particularly from the 2nd century B.C. to the 10th century A.D., and, although it then deteriorated, it has been continuously maintained and is once more showing renewed signs of life. In 1901 there were more than 7000 monks living in different parts of the island, in groups varying in number from two or three up to forty, divided into three sects known as the Siamese, which dates from the middle of the 18th century and includes

[1] See H. Hackmann, *Buddhism as a Religion*, pp. 64–65, and T. W. Rhys Davids in E.R.E. iii. 331.

about half of the total number, the Amarapura, their opponents, founded some fifty years later, and the Ramanya, the most recently formed and the strictest in its discipline.

Burmese tradition credits Buddhaghosa, who lived in the 5th century A.D., with the transmission of Buddhism to the Mons or Talaings, who at that time inhabited Burma. But recent discoveries made during the excavation of buried cities tend to confirm the statements found in some of the Chinese and Tai annals to the effect that Buddhism came to Burma at a considerably earlier date, and in the northern or Mahayanistic form. Its history is obscure, but at a subsequent date the Hinayanistic Buddhism displaced the more corrupt type, and communication was established and maintained with the *bhikkhus* of Ceylon. The Burmese monks have generally kept in close touch with the lay people, who regard them with great esteem, and they have long enjoyed a deserved reputation for their scholarship and educational work. In 1901 there were over 15,000 monasteries in Burma, containing nearly 92,000 monks, probationers, and acolytes. In Cambodia and Siam, Buddhism and its monastic system have been established since the 5th century A.D., the Mahayana type, which was the first to enter, being supplanted here also by the Hinayana type in the 15th century. In Annam and Cochin China, on the contrary, the northern Buddhism has persisted.

The introduction of Buddhism into China, again in the northern form, took place in the 1st century of the Christian era ; [1] and here, though it found itself opposed by the two characteristically native religions of a civilised people, it established itself no less certainly than in the lands previously mentioned, where only primitive peoples and religions of the lower culture were encountered. Until the 4th century the State authorities opposed the development of Buddhist monachism by forbidding the foreign monks who settled in China to recruit their ranks from the Chinese people. Not only did the monastic order grow rapidly after the cancellation of this decree, however, but the Taoists, whose hermits were already familiar before the introduction of Buddhism, conformed to the practice of the new religion by establishing for themselves an organised monastic system. Confucianists

[1] See E. H. Parker, *Studies in Chinese Religion*, pp. 225–233.

showed a more determined hostility to Buddhism, and its adherents suffered many persecutions at their hands. Yet, although in the 8th century some 12,000 monks and nuns were compelled to abandon their homes and return to secular life, and in the following century 260,000 were similarly treated, the monastic orders survived. To-day there are only a few Taoist monasteries remaining, and the greatly reduced number of conventual establishments occupied by Buddhist monks speaks plainly of the dwindling power of the religion: yet the whole country is dotted with remains which tell of the great extent and power of the monastic order in the past.

From China the monks passed into Korea in the 4th century, and thence into Japan in the 6th century. After a period of brilliant success under the protection of the Korye dynasty, extending from the 9th to the 14th century, during a part of which it was the rule for every family which had three sons to devote one to the monastery, and when royal princes not infrequently became monks, Korean Buddhism fell into disfavour and gradually declined. At present there are in that country fewer than 1,000 monasteries and only about 8,000 monks and nuns occupying them. In Japan the new faith slowly overcame the obstinate opposition of the native Shinto religion, and, establishing direct communication with Chinese Buddhism, flourished exceedingly, its strength centring as always in its numerous monasteries, until it was met by Christianity in the 16th century, and by a revived Confucianism in the century following.[1] Greatly weakened by sectarianism, it still remains a by no means negligible force in the life of the Japanese people.

In the 7th century the Mahayana Buddhism passed into Tibet, and here at least there has been no failure succeeding to a period of power. On the contrary the practice of Buddhism has been carried to its logical conclusion so thoroughly and successfully that out of a total existing population of about three and a half millions, half a million are at present members of the monastic order. Some of them are living apart as anchorites; the great majority are gathered in the numerous monastic establishments which are so prominent

[1] For the history of Buddhism in Japan, see *The Creed of Half Japan*, by A. Lloyd.

a feature in that land. Lhasa, the capital, has some 2,500 monasteries, containing 10,000 monks out of a total population of 30,000.

3

The growth of asceticism in the Mediterranean lands in pre-Christian and early Christian times was a complicated process which is not easily described. Various types of asceticism sprang up and developed in close conjunction with one another; and peoples of widely different characters were involved, who, though there is abundant proof of a close intercourse between them dating back to the pre-Homeric age, yet succeeded in maintaining with some consistency a characteristic religious attitude.

Before the 6th century B.C. the religious history of the Greek and Roman peoples provides only the usual rudimentary asceticism of undeveloped religions, expiation being generally easy and sacrifices trifling. In addition, Rome furnishes a suggestion of vocational asceticism in the restrictions imposed upon the Vestal virgins and upon the priests of Jupiter; and it exhibits a marked tendency to patriotic asceticism, of discipline and of self-sacrifice, which is to be compared with that found in Japan, and is by no means without religious significance. It was in Greece, however, that the 6th century B.C. witnessed the rise of a more pronounced asceticism, in two associated movements representing a departure from the accustomed worship of the Olympian gods in the direction of a religion at once more personal and emotional, and more rational and ethical. Those who practised the cult of Orpheus, the mythical Thracian singer, banded themselves together in ascetic brotherhoods (*Θίασοι*), who in their endeavour to effect the purification of the imprisoned soul avoided all food of animal origin, and generally regulated their dress and conduct with a view to the avoidance of uncleanness; while the Pythagoreans, exponents of "an intellectualised Orphism," [1] formed cœnobite communities, practised continence and abstinence, and, at any rate in their later development, observed a rule of silence. The influence of this novel type of religion with its definitely ascetic bias spread from Greece throughout the Mediterranean world, and is to be clearly traced through all the confusion of cults and philosophies which heralded the

[1] W. R. Inge, *The Phil. of Plotinus*, i. 6.

coming of Christianity, existed side by side with it, and finally disappeared before it.[1] During these centuries of religious unsettlement marked by interpenetration, syncretism, and eclecticism, most of the gods and goddesses who were so freely borrowed had their wandering bands of devotees, who not infrequently practised a fanatical asceticism; admission to the mysteries, which were central to the worship of each, commonly involved a measure of ascetic preparation; and the moral life of initiates was governed in varying degrees by restrictions peculiar to the cult which they favoured.[2]

At least as early as the 4th century B.C. Greece borrowed from Phrygia the worship of Cybele, the mother-goddess, and Attis her male companion; and this worship was established in Rome in 204 B.C., though it was not until imperial times that her great popularity among Romans was achieved. The wild ceremonies of the worship of Magna Mater were performed by self-mutilated priests; she had an ascetic order of mendicant friars, who were accustomed to play on the feelings of crowds by scourging themselves for the expiation of sins as a preliminary to the collection of alms; and the horrible rite of the Taurobolium, in which initiates were baptised in the dripping blood of a slaughtered bull, was especially associated with her cult. Fanatical worshippers of the Cappadocian goddess Ina were to be seen in various parts of the Empire, robed in black and wearing high caps, dancing madly through the streets, shrieking, playing upon drums and trumpets, cutting themselves with knives, and drinking their own blood. Dea Syra had her human sacrifices and her mystics; at Byblus priests sometimes stood in her honour for seven days on a pillar thirty cubits high; pilgrims journeyed to her shrine, performing by the way and at the shrine itself many acts of self-abasement and penance.

[1] *Cf.* S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 516. "The mythical Orpheus represents, in the field of religion and in the theory of life and death, an immense revolution in Greek thought, and was an enduring spirit which produced a profound effect down to the last years of paganism in the West."

[2] Gomperz, as against Rohde, considers that Orphism was unique in its emphasis on morality. Inge says, op. cit., i. 56, "Rohde appears to me to be wrong in minimising the mystical and moral elements in the old mysteries. I agree with Wobbermin and Kennedy (*St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions*, p. 84)."

The worship of the composite and artificially devised [1] Sarapis and his consort Isis spread from Egypt through all the great commercial centres of the Empire during the last three centuries B.C. Ascetics of both sexes are said to have occupied the forty-two temples of the god which were standing in Egypt in the 2nd century A.D.; [2] and the priests of Isis, who performed daily services in her honour, were forbidden the use of wine, pork, fish, and certain vegetables, and were required to remain celibate, while the initiates generally practised abstinence and performed penances. A little before the beginning of the Christian era the religion of Mithra began to move westward from Cilicia, where it had established itself at an earlier date; and, meeting with great favour among the Roman legionaries, to whom it especially commended itself by the strict discipline which it imposed, it grew to a considerable importance in the 3rd century, but declined rapidly before the growing power of Christianity in the following century. Manicheism, another outgrowth of the old Persian faith which had a great influence in the West, required its inner circle of teachers, known as the Elect, to abstain from the use of flesh and wine and from marriage, and to hold no property; while the Hearers, or Combatants, were expected to provide for their support. In this it stands as a type of the Gnostic systems generally, which had much in common with the mystery religions.

To the asceticism which thus spread itself throughout the Roman Empire in connection with the various Greek, Egyptian, and Oriental cults and their popular mysteries, must be added a completely different type of asceticism based upon certain philosophic systems originating in Greece. Cynicism, founded in the 4th century B.C. by Antisthenes, who gave an exaggerated emphasis to the negative side of the Socratic teaching, successfully encouraged among those who professed it a life of abstinence and renunciation carried not infrequently to extreme lengths of coarseness and vulgarity. It flourished for about a century and then gave way to the more scientific system taught by Zeno, who effectually met the new situation created by the absorption of Greece in the

[1] See J. G. Milne in E.R.E. vi. 376.

[2] See H. B. Workman, *The Evolution of the Monastic Ideal*, p. 84. And *cf.* J. G. Milne, E.R.E. vi. 377. O. Zöckler considers that the existence of Sarapis priests of a monkish type has been disproved by E. Preuschen (E.R.E. ii. 75).

Macedonian empire and the consequent widening of men's vision, by formulating a theory of life which had regard, not to the restricted citizenship which they had previously known, but to essential humanity. Stoicism taught men the high dignity of human nature, and, laying increasing emphasis on the virtuous character as it developed its hold on the Romans, it persuaded men to develop their powers by a strict self-regimen. The influence of this system proved so great, especially among men of standing and leadership, that " it is not too much to say that through Stoicism the Roman world-empire found itself a soul." [1] Cynicism, which had probably never quite disappeared but had been preserved by small numbers of wandering mendicants in various parts of the Empire, emerged once again with renewed strength as the Stoics made less of their theoretical basis and more of their practical asceticism, and the Neo-Cynicism became a sturdy rival to the largely dephilosophised Stoicism.

A third variety of asceticism which partakes of the nature of the two already described is found in connection with the Neo-Platonism which emerges in the 3rd century A.D. This was prepared for by a revival of Pythagoreanism two centuries earlier, probably at Alexandria, and by the teaching of Philo. In their endeavour to free themselves from the contamination of demonic influences the Neo-Pythagoreans performed various expiatory ceremonies and ablutions, and practised abstinence and, in some cases, continence, with all the zeal of the original Pythagoreans; and, while their extravagances were rejected by Plotinus, just as Gautama rejected the extreme asceticism of the Brahmans, he nevertheless took over from them such a measure of ascetic practice as was essential to the success of his endeavour towards soul-union with the Absolute God. In this he was followed by the members of his school, some of whom, like Porphyry, went considerably beyond their master in the stress they laid upon the necessity of asceticism.

It was in Egypt, the home of Neo-Platonism, that Christian monachism took its rise; and, since that land originated and received so many successive ascetic movements during the centuries immediately preceding the beginnings of the Christian monastic system, it has not unnaturally been supposed that Christianity owes its monachism to the

[1] E. V. Arnold in E.R.E. xi. 864.

influence of these movements and not to any inherent tendency in that direction. No adequate proofs have been adduced, however, to establish Hilgenfeld's theory that Christian monachism is derived from Buddhism, or Weingarten's contention that it developed out of something pagan and Egyptian, or, indeed, any of the theories which seek to derive it directly from non-Christian ascetic movements.[1] On the contrary, as Dom F. Cabrol has pointed out, it becomes increasingly probable that Buddhism has been influenced by Christian monastic practice rather than that it has influenced Christianity; and, as to Weingarten's assertions concerning St. Pachomius and his connection with the recluses of Sarapis, they rest on "a series of unverified hypotheses. Pachomius was never a κάτοχος." [2] The general influence of pagan asceticism on Christianity cannot be denied; asceticism was very much in the air in the 3rd century in Egypt, and Christians could not escape its suggestiveness; but the Church had its ascetics from the beginning of its history, "fasting and prayer, and the voluntary surrender of possessions, and also works of philanthropy," being "recognised exercises of those who gave themselves up to an ascetical life," together with celibacy, "the first and always the chief asceticism." [3]

No doubt this early Christian asceticism owed something to the practice of the stricter disciplinarians among the Jews, though the spirit and general theory of that practice had been entirely transformed by Christ. Nor was Judaism altogether wanting in precedents for the Christian monastic life. Neither the Rechabites nor the Nazirites are to be accounted important in this connection, the former in particular being probably few in number and little more than stubborn conservatives who refused to adopt the Canaanitish culture; but the Essenes of Palestine, appearing in the 2nd century B.C., and the Therapeutæ of Egypt, described by Philo at about the beginning of the Christian era, deserve to be reckoned as true forerunners of the Christian monastic communities. The Essenes, who had their headquarters on the western shores of the Dead Sea, but led a semi-

[1] See H. Leclercq in *Dict. d'Arch. chrét. et de Lit.*, ii. 3053–3078; W. H. Mackean, *Christ. Monast. in Egypt*, pp. 14–24; and D. U. Berlière, *L'Ordre monastique*, pp. 12–17.

[2] E.R.E. viii. 781 f.

[3] Dom C. Butler in the *Camb. Med. Hist.*, i. 521.

nomadic life, and were to be found in most of the villages and towns of Palestine, practised celibacy, obedience, and silence; the Therapeutæ, who differed from the Essenes in that they included both sexes, lived in separate cells among the hills to the south of Lake Mareotis, near Alexandria, led a life of similar austerity, and were in addition vegetarians.[1]

During the first three centuries of the Church's history, however, it was sufficiently heroic for most Christians to practise their religion in the world in the face of bitter persecution.[2] When, early in the 4th century, persecution ceased and the profession of Christianity began to be generally approved and comparatively easy, many found scope for their ascetic enthusiasm only by abandoning the world and living in a sternly disciplined seclusion.[3] In the Egyptian desert hermits were already to be found, who, like St. Antony,[4] had withdrawn themselves from the world for the practice of holiness; and their numbers were now very largely increased. Living at first in isolation from one another, the anchorites of Lower Egypt came in time to group themselves in "lauras," or little villages of cells; and, though the members of each group accepted no regular organisation, but remained only loosely attached, they frequently agreed to the observance of a common daily time-table. In Upper Egypt this development reached its inevitable conclusion. St. Pachomius provided for the establishment of an organised community of ascetics in his monastery at Tabennisi, and thus gave to the Church that ideal of an ordered cœnobitic life which was to prove so mighty a power in the course of its history.

Elsewhere in the East, in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, the practice of withdrawal from the world was also being widely adopted, for the most part on individualistic and sometimes eccentric lines until St. Basil of Cæsarea, after visiting Egypt, established himself at the head of a community by the side of the Iris in Pontus, while Macrina, his

[1] *See The Beginnings of Christianity*, i. 89–96.

[2] Virgins, widows, and others lived a specially austere life in some degree of separateness. See P. Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality*, pp. 36–48.

[3] *Cf.* W. Hobhouse, *The Church and the World*, pp. 111–121, and H. B. Workman, *The Evol. of the Mon. Ideal*, p. 82 f.

[4] For the vindication of St. Antony's position as "Father of Christian monks," *see* C. Butler, *The Lausiac Hist. of Palladius*, i. 215–223.

sister, founded a monastery for women on the opposite bank. In several writings he set forth a noble conception of the principles of the monastic life, and interpreted its practice in terms of the Church's dogmatic system so as to demonstrate the pre-eminence of that life as the ideal way. Gradually his views won acceptance, by their own merit and by legislation, until in the 6th century they were embodied in the definite system which was imposed by the Justinian Code; and they were worked out with much practical detail in the 8th century by Theodore, abbot of the Studite monastery in Constantinople. Since that time Eastern monachism has remained stereotyped in the Basilian form. The historical conditions of the Eastern Church have failed to produce successive waves of enthusiasm resulting in the development of new orders, and monastic life has continued practically as it was in the 4th century, except that St. Basil's high appreciation of the importance of toil has unfortunately been forgotten.

During the 4th and 5th centuries the Western Church adopted from the East the practice of monachism, which had earned the recommendation of such leaders as St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine, and of the papacy; and there sprang up numerous independent centres of vigorous ascetic life in Africa, Italy, Spain, Gaul, Germany, Ireland, and northern Britain. The writings of Cassian, who brought from Asia Minor a practical knowledge of the Basilian ideal, lent some slight measure of uniformity to the organisation of these independent centres, but there was a serious lack of system until the formulation of the Benedictine Rule in the 6th century. To spiritual gifts and great practical wisdom St. Benedict of Nursia added a wide knowledge of the previous history of monachism and of the rules which had been devised by various founders.[1] Rejecting what was unsuitable for Western use, and appropriating whatever in them was good, he made his own contribution and wove together the whole with singular ability, giving to monachism just that unity and stability which it had hitherto lacked. His Rule spread slowly, first making its way through Italy from the mother monastery of Monte Cassino, and then

[1] "He did not write till late, till he was on the threshold of eternity, after study and perhaps after experience of the principal monastic codes." Dom Paul Delatte, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, p. 9.

reaching out through the whole of the West; but with the aid of Gregory the Great and afterwards of St. Boniface it triumphed so completely that by the early years of the 9th century other rules were scarcely even remembered.[1]

Already, however, there had been a serious declension from the first level of pure ascetic enthusiasm, and at the end of the 8th century St. Benedict of Aniane had attempted a reformation on lines of severity and rigid uniformity. The reform did not prove lasting; further, the monasteries suffered great losses at the hands of the invading Northmen, and in the 10th century a second revival was initiated at Cluny. This movement succeeded in restoring vigorous life to many of the monasteries for a time, and also in linking them with Cluny, which became their recognised head: but again the revival was followed by decadence.

During the 11th century there arose various hermit-orders, such as the Grandmontines and Carthusians, who reverted to the old "laura" system of Northern Egypt; and on the threshold of the next century the Cistercian order came into being at Citeaux, and developed greatly the connexional principle which had been adopted in the Clunian reform. But a new ideal had been conceived, a new way of asceticism was already being put into practice, and, in spite of many attempts at reform, monachism failed to recapture its earlier vitality. At the Reformation it suffered unduly for the evils which had grown up within it, being violently and shamefully crippled by the robbery and dissolution of many of its houses; in countries where excessive reforming zeal was held somewhat in check at that time monachism has since suffered to a greater or less extent through State action; yet it remains to-day an undoubted power in the Church, and during the last century it has shown distinct signs of returning vigour.[2]

The new way which ascetics had found was that of

[1] Except in Ireland. Dom C. Butler states that "in Ireland, where the population continued purely Keltic, the Irish rules and Irish monasticism maintained themselves throughout the Middle Ages." *Camb. Med. Hist.*, i. 534.

[2] *Cf.* Dom F. Cabrol in E.R.E. viii. 797. "The 19th century was one of restoration for monasticism. While in England, Germany, Austria, and Italy, the ancient monastic congregations and the great abbeys were maintained in spite of all difficulties, some attempts at monastic restoration were made in France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria."

banding themselves together under discipline, for economy, for efficiency, and for the spiritual strength of a common life. This arrangement was to be traced back to the time of St. Augustine: when, therefore, in the last quarter of the 11th century, an order of "canons" was founded by Ivo of Chartres, it was given a rule based on Augustinian precepts, and the name of "Canons Regular of St. Augustine" was bestowed upon it. The members of the order renounced all private property and lived in community, but they were required to serve their own churches and were free to give themselves to educational and philanthropic work. In succession to them there followed many lay orders devoted specifically to military tasks or the care of the sick, or generally to work among the poor.

The 12th century saw the rise of the three great military orders. The Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, undertook to protect sick pilgrims from the Saracens and to nourish them in their hospital in Jerusalem. Later they abandoned the work of caring for the sick, and gave themselves exclusively to the defence of the Faith by force of arms. The Templars, whose Foundation lay near to the supposed site of Solomon's Temple, made it their business to keep the roads leading to Jerusalem safe for pilgrims by waging war on the bands of robbers who infested the country; while the Teutonic knights, like the Hospitallers, exchanged their first care, which was a hospital at Acre, for the sword, and took service in eastern Germany against the pagan Prussians.

The earliest of the Hospital Orders seems to have been that of the Hospital Friars of St. Antony, known as Antonites, founded in 1065. These were followed by numerous orders of men and women, who devoted themselves with great charity to the care of the sick and dying. The Friars of the Holy Ghost bound themselves by the words, "I consecrate myself to God, to the Holy Ghost, to the Blessed Virgin, and to our Lords the sick, to be their servant all the days of my life." The Trinitarian Friars and the Friars of our Lady of Mercy made it their special endeavour to ransom prisoners who had been captured by the Muslims. Lepers received attention from the Knights of St. Lazarus. No form of sickness and distress escaped the notice of these faithful ascetics, and the greatest care and the fullest measure of love were bestowed upon the most loathsome of them.

The wider range, greater numbers, and extraordinary influence of the Mendicant Orders have given them an importance far exceeding that of any other crusaders of this type. Franciscans, Dominicans, Austin Friars, and Carmelites, all dating from the first half of the 13th century, these are the outstanding exponents of this particular type of organised asceticism. They had been preceded by the Waldenses, the followers of Valdo, a merchant of Lyons, who renounced all his possessions in 1176, and devoted himself to the work of preaching the Gospel to the poor; but "the Poor of Lyons" were condemned as heretics and expelled from the Church. The others, on the contrary, not only remained within the Church but became its most powerful agents for good at a time when shameful corruption was prevalent among its leaders. True to the ideal of the ardent evangelist St. Dominic, they preached salvation untiringly to the common people; true to the loving spirit of St. Francis, they lived and laboured among the poor with utter unselfishness and Christian tenderness through a long term of years. The fire of enthusiasm burnt itself out eventually, and evil days came; but it added a permanent glory to the Church, and its memory remains as a powerful inspiration.

Wyclif's "pauper priests," different as they were, must be reckoned in the same succession. They, too, preached and practised poverty, and for the propagation of what they held to be saving truth they laboured unsparingly among the people. So also the Jesuits, profoundly different again, provide yet another instance of an ascetic crusade of service. Under the inspiration of St. Ignatius Loyola men yielded themselves to the full measure of the obedient service that was declared to be necessary for the overthrow of heresy and the preservation of the threatened papacy; and the Society remains to this day, a bulwark of the Roman Church, established "in all European countries, in North and South America, and in many of the old mission fields," numbering "in all some 17,000 members." [1] In the 18th century the Passionists were founded by St. Paul of the Cross and the Redemptorists by St. Alphonsus de' Liguori, both of them

[1] H Thurston, S.J., in E.R.E. vii. 504. T. J. Campbell gives details on p. 928 of *The Jesuits*. "At the beginning of 1920 it (the Society) had 17,250 members: 8,454 priests, 4,819 scholastics, 3,977 lay-brothers."

orders devoted especially to the work of preaching, and scattered at the present time over the whole world; while the Oblates, the Marists, and the Assumptionists, together with numerous congregations of missionaries, were founded for the same type of work during the first half of the 19th century.

In addition to all this vocational asceticism practised by those members of the Church who came to be known specifically as the "religious," much institutional and semi-vocational asceticism has been practised by the faithful throughout the Church's history, occasional impetus being given to this general asceticism by the emergence of irregular groups such as the Encratites, Montanists, Cathari, and Flagellants, who, by their practice of an intensive discipline, have assisted in restoring a falling standard. Very early it began to be the custom for catechumens to prepare for Baptism, and for communicants to prepare for the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood, by the discipline of fasting. Through the gradual regularisation of the practices of individual piety fasting on "station" days, Wednesdays and Fridays in the East, and Fridays in the West, became a general custom by the end of the 4th century; and the Lenten fast, beginning as a brief introduction to the Easter festival, grew to its full forty days by the same period. Almsgiving has been widely practised from earliest times as a form of virtuous renunciation; and self-discipline of every conceivable kind has been undertaken as penance through the extension and development of the penitential system. As the result of a protracted struggle the secular clergy of one great section of the Church have long been required to practise the celibacy which belongs more particularly to the monastic life.

With the Reformation another type of general asceticism was widely adopted, living henceforth side by side with the old. Puritanism, the name by which it is known, denotes a definite ecclesiastical outlook and also a particular political movement; but in a more general sense it stands for a marked tendency to strictness of living, simplicity, frugality, sober restraint, and serious industry. Frequently it has put on a forbidding gloom and a fanatical severity; frequently also it has been abandoned in a spirit of lukewarmness and compromise; but its perversion and its loss have alike proved only temporary. Taking its rise among the

Anabaptists of Germany and the Netherlands in response to the bidding of Holy Scripture, the only authority they recognised, it was repeated by the followers of Calvin at Geneva, where godly discipline, ecclesiastical and moral, was sternly enforced, and it came to England with the returning refugees in the reign of Elizabeth. For a century it made its mark upon the life of the people of Britain through Presbyterians and Independents, and later through the Quakers, who represented puritanism in revolt against a puritanism which was held to have failed; and during this time it conveyed itself to America and laid firm foundations in a new world.

German Pietism, owing its origin to Philipp Jakob Spener (1635–1705), was essentially a re-discovery of the value of puritanism, made at a time when England was reacting strongly against puritan influence; and it led to Zinzendorf's reconstitution of the Moravian Brethren at Herrnhut on strictly ascetic community lines, and through that to the Methodism of the Wesleys and their followers. These restored to their countrymen the ideal of the disciplined life, and, though eventually they left the Church to which they belonged, they inspired within that Church a corresponding movement marked by evangelical piety and puritan morals. Similarly in America Pietistic influences had already produced a revival of religious life known as "The Great Awakening," in which ascetic tendencies plainly declared themselves on puritan lines. Since then there has been no such deep-rooted or widespread puritan movement, but the existence of the same ascetic spirit is to be perceived consistently in the lives of many individual Protestants, and moral puritanism is by no means excluded from the ideals of the various Protestant communities.

Two further elements remain to be noticed. Throughout its whole course the Christian Church has been prolific in the production of non-professional vocational ascetics, of people, that is to say, who, in the discharge of their secular vocation, have entirely devoted themselves to the faithful accomplishment of some arduous way of life in the world. The number of these has grown beyond all reckoning through the increasing ages of the Church's history, in response to the greater demands and wider opportunities of advancing civilisation. The other element is that of the mystics, who have appeared at intervals, sometimes in isolation, more commonly in groups, but always as practisers of the ascetic life. Their

numbers are not large ; they are to be regarded as an elect few, endowed with peculiar gifts, chosen for the bestowal of special favours, but called to the practice of an asceticism containing unique elements.

4

The birthplace of Islam had its native asceticism in the pre-Islamic period, or " Time of Ignorance." In the service of their many gods the Arabs " undertook pilgrimages ; they brought votive offerings to them, offered them sacrifices, and approached them with rites and ceremonies. Some things they held to be Divinely permitted, others prohibited." [1] Some little time before the appearance of the prophet earnest men known as Hanifs [2] rejected polytheism and idol-worship, and, probably under the influence of Christian hermits living in their land, wore sackcloth and practised obedience. Although Muhammad lent no support to the practice of some of the forms commonly taken by asceticism, he imposed upon all his followers certain religious observances which involve no light measure of group ascetic practice. Every day the five exercises of prayer are to be performed at the appointed times ; every year the month Ramadan is to be observed with fasting ; wine is prohibited at all times, together with certain articles of food, and by many Muslims at least these prohibitions are respected ; and the pilgrimage to Mecca is to be undertaken in all cases where it is possible.

But while institutional asceticism is thus required of every Muslim; in the very first century of Muhammadanism there arose a powerful ascetical movement with mystical tendencies, which sprang from a fanatical observance of the prescribed religious duties, and gradually passed over into definitely mystical practice, known as Sufism.[3] This has persisted in producing vocational ascetics in limited numbers as mystics and mystical freethinkers of a philosophic type, especially in Persia ; and from the 12th century A.D., it has powerfully influenced the whole course of Islamic history

[1] Ash-Shahristani, tr. by S. M. Zwemer, *Islam : A Challenge to Faith*, p. 10.

[2] See W. St. C. Tisdall, *The Orig. Sources of the Qur'an*, pp. 260–273.

[3] " The earliest Sufis were, in fact, ascetics and quietists rather than mystics." R. A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, p. 4.

by giving birth to numerous orders of darwishes, or mendicants,[1] which have their own special type of devotional exercises devised to promote religious experience of a mystical nature, and in some cases show a zeal for philanthropy and works of mercy.

Each order has its headquarters, or chief *zawiyah*, and this is sometimes the original oratory of the founder, possibly also including his tomb; for the orders commonly grew up round some such sacred spot, as disciples were attracted by the wali, or saint, who dwelt there. At this and other subordinate centres the professional members of the order live a monastic life under the rule of a shaikh, many of them wandering as mendicants, however, from place to place, while considerable numbers of the Muslims in the district are usually attached to the order very much after the manner of the Tertiaries in the Christian mendicant orders, wearing a distinctive badge, though living in the world, and accepting special obligations.[2]

The senior and most popular order is the Qadiri, which is believed to have been founded by Abd al-Qadir of Gilan (d. 1166). Wherever Islam holds sway this order is to be met with, being especially prominent in Tunis and Morocco; and its members maintain a reputation for charity and for special powers of mystic communion. The Shadhiliyyah, who are essentially a mystical school, belong to an order dating from the 13th century, and are distributed throughout North Africa generally, and also in the Hedjaz, in Syria, and in Turkey. The same century saw the foundation of the Sa'adiyyah by Sa'ad al-Din al Jabani of Damascus, and of the Maulavi order by Jalalu'ddin Rumi of Qoniya (Iconium) in Asia Minor. The Maulawiyyah, or "dancing darwishes" as they are called, have a considerable reputation in modern Turkey; while the Sa'adiyyah have been prominent as an ecstatic order, especially in Egypt, where they have maintained a close connection with the Rifa'iyyah, or "howling

[1] E. Montet in E.R.E. x. 719 ff. gives particulars of forty different orders, varying greatly in the degree of ascetic discipline practised by them, as also in numbers and organisation. The members of these orders are generally known as faqirs (poor) in India, and as khwan (brethren) in Africa. In *Les Confréries religieuses musulmanes*, O. Depont and X. Coppolani treat with great fulness of the orders found in N. Africa. For an account of those found in India see J. Sharif, *Islam in India*, ch. 31.

[2] See D. B. Macdonald, *Aspects of Islam*, p. 158 f.

darwishes," members of an order derived from the Qadiriyyah in the 12th century.

The Naqshbandiyyah, dating from the 14th century, are specially numerous in Central Asia, where the various orders are strictly organised and disciplined and are much more influential than in Persia and Turkey. Severe asceticism and strenuous mystical practice characterise the Khalwatiyyah, who were founded a little later, their name being derived from that *khalwa* (solitude) which is still greatly favoured by them as an aid to mystical experience. The 15th century gave birth to a Tunisian order whose members, known as 'Arusiyyah or Salamiyyah, are much given to ascetic displays, " wonder-working," and hysterical dancing, like the Isawiyyah, whose order was founded in Morocco in the 16th century by Muhammad b. Isa, and has become one of the most important of the African Muslim fraternities. Similarly the Hamadsha, another Moroccan order dating from the same period, maltreat themselves in public. The Baqtashi order, also founded in the 16th century, is particularly strong in Albania, and seems to represent an attempt to blend Islam with Christianity.

In the 18th century 'Ammar Bu-Senna founded the 'Ammariyyah, and Ahmad b. al-Mukhtar al-Tijani founded the Tijaniyyah, both in Algeria, the former of whom are given to violent and excessive asceticism, while the latter are noted rather for simplicity of life and for mystical meditation. Mystical practice is also the mark of three orders founded in the 19th century ; the Derqawa, a large and important Moroccan brotherhood in which the virtue of obedience receives a special emphasis ; the Madaniyyah, an order derived from the Derqawa, found chiefly in the near East, though still existing in North Africa ; and the Emirghaniyyah, prominent in Arabia and in the Sudan. The Sanusiyyah, a body of puritans claiming to present the original faith and practice of Islam, are an Algerian order founded in 1835 and now firmly established in Egypt and Arabia, though not so influential as is commonly supposed ; while the Malami is probably the latest order to win any considerable degree of success.

5

This rapid survey of the place occupied by asceticism in the history of religion shows that the extent of man's ascetic

activity is very considerable and that the number of ascetics to be reckoned with far exceeds the common estimate.[1] Further, it is seen to be composed of elements representative of every stage of man's moral and religious progress, though ascetics have been especially numerous in the higher culture after periods of moral laxity, as by a natural and inevitable process of reaction, and also at times of spiritual quickening, thus suggesting that asceticism is intimately associated with vital and enthusiastic religion. From the pre-animistic religion which is characterised by the conception of a vague and impersonal mana, up to the purest monotheism, there is no stage where asceticism is not found : whether we turn to the group morality of savage peoples or to the reflective morality of civilised nations, asceticism is encountered on every hand. In rudimentary and unconsidered forms it takes its beginning where religion and morals begin, and with ever-growing self-realisation it marks the whole course of their development, constituting the most patent characteristic of certain phases, but never entirely absent, even when it appears to be wholly alien. By this discipline the African negro who regulates his life through awe of the mysterious powers by which he feels himself to be surrounded is linked with the Hindu who subjects his body to hideous tortures so that he may be delivered from the weary round of human existence, and with the Christian who expresses sorrow for sin by restricting himself to a spare diet on fast days. The ascetic brotherhood embraces Australian aborigines, Greek philosophers, Muhammadan darwishes, Indian mendicants, Buddhist monks, Catholic Jesuits, Protestant puritans, and all the vast army of those who strive, by means of renunciation, suffering, and toil, to bring themselves into a right relationship with God and man. Sex, age, climate, and standard of culture, all avail to introduce modifications of the practice adopted ; but they are powerless to extinguish asceticism.

The persistency with which man turns to ascetic practice prompts us to exclaim with Dr. Burkitt, " O testimonium

[1] *Cf.* E. Durkheim, *The Elem. Forms of the Rel. Life*, p. 311. " Asceticism is not a rare, exceptional and nearly abnormal fruit of the religious life, as some have supposed it to be ; on the contrary, it is one of its essential elements. Every religion contains it, at least in germ, for there are none in which a system of interdicts is not found."

animæ naturaliter—asceticæ ! " [1] It is certain that psychologists would demur to Dr. D. S. Margoliouth's suggestion that asceticism is to be referred to a specific " ascetic instinct which as a fact of human nature cannot be neglected " : [2] yet the student of religion is constrained to recognise that asceticism is a normal and constant product of human nature.

Now the touchstone of all religion is found in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. If, therefore, asceticism, so general and so persistent a phenomenon in man's religious history, is to be satisfactorily interpreted and in any degree approved, it must be by bringing it to the test of the Christian revelation. Should it prove that Christianity has no interpretation to offer, no perfected ideal to present, it will have to be admitted, either that human nature is burdened with a bitter endowment to no good purpose, or that Christianity has failed to establish its claim to be in harmony with the essential nature of man and to provide for the complete satisfaction of all his spiritual needs.

In view of the very extensive literature directed against asceticism by Christian thinkers it might be plausibly urged, in spite of the large place that asceticism has occupied in the history of the Christian Church, that Christianity has already declared its mind and that the decision is unfavourable. As we have seen above, it is identified with dualism by some, who represent it as a virulent parasite imported from the East, battening on the life-blood of Christianity. For them there is no real distinction between the theory of life which moves the Hindu to outrageous self-torture and that which prompts the Lenten discipline of a modern Catholic : or, if a difference be admitted, it is that in the former case dualistic belief is plainly avowed, while in the latter it is held all unconsciously. For others asceticism is wholly alien because it is believed to be legalistic. It is argued that whereas the central fact of Christianity is the death of the Divine Redeemer, by which alone man is able to gain eternal life, the ascetic presumes to base his claim to salvation on his own works. Again, it is urged that Christ taught a religion of brotherhood, but the ascetic cuts himself off from

[1] *Early Christianity outside the Roman Empire*, p. 88. The reference is to a report that Protestant converts in India are frequently anxious to adopt the wandering ascetic life.

[2] *Mohammedanism*, p. 194.

his fellows, and applies himself to a purely selfish quest of salvation. He seeks to save his own soul, in violation of a fundamental axiom laid down by the Master. And, finally, there are perils of the way which are themselves accounted sufficient to condemn it. Spiritual intolerance, externalism, moods of weariness and intense loathing, and, as a climax, unrestrained fanaticism—these are advanced as sure proofs that the asceticism from which they spring is not to be reconciled with Christianity.

As we have already seen, however, much of this criticism falls to the ground when asceticism is carefully defined. Protestant Christianity criticises particular asceticisms, which are but parts of the whole. Its criticism has been for the most part narrowly conceived, with an eye to early and mediæval types of the worst kind. It is incontrovertible in its specific application, but it is not to be construed into a declaration of Protestant hostility to all asceticism; for Protestants themselves practise asceticism of other types than those which come under their censure. Inquiry is therefore by no means foreclosed. Claiming a wider comprehensiveness for the term asceticism than has obtained among such critics, according to the definition already formulated, we may still refer the question to the teaching of Christ with an open mind.

CHAPTER III

THE ASCETICISM OF THE CROSS

I

THE primary purpose of our Lord's teaching is to focus the attention of His hearers on that moral and spiritual order which is known as "the Kingdom." Taking up the arresting cry of the Baptist, He proclaims the advent of the commonwealth foretold by a long line of inspired prophets; and He proceeds, further, to connect, to supplement, and to interpret, all their partial visions of this ideal polity. With sure insight and the simple directness that proceeds from a full knowledge He re-presents in vivid detail that new and divine order which, viewed from afar, had been the solace and aspiration of many generations of the people of Israel: and with unmistakable authority He announces its immediate inception. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." [1]

Membership in the Kingdom is no mere matter of legal enrolment or artificial association It is effected by a new birth which completely transforms a man's conceptions of the world-order, and admits him to new relationships constituting a fulness of life attainable by no other means. "The kingdom of God is within you": [2] and citizenship is identical with abounding spiritual vitality. Therefore this Kingdom, to which men are summoned so lovingly and yet so insistently, is declared with emphasis to be of supreme importance. With evident astonishment and pain because of their ignorant preference, Christ strives to arouse men to a sense of its surpassing value, and to teach them the comparative nothingness of all things else. "The kingdom of heaven," He assures them, "is like unto a treasure hidden in a field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he

[1] St. Mark i. 15.

[2] St. Luke xvii. 21.

goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." [1] It is a pearl of great price," [2] for which a man would be well advised to exchange all that he has. It is of infinitely greater value than food and clothes and those bagatelles on which men lavish so much care and attention It represents the sole means of fulfilling and preserving the essential life of man, and there is nothing to be desired in comparison with it. " For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life ? " [3] Let men serve their own highest interests by giving to God's Kingdom the chief place in all their thoughts and endeavours. " Seek ye *first* his kingdom, and his righteousness." [4]

In that saying it is revealed that the Kingdom falls into no man's lap by sheer good fortune. It is bestowed by divine bounty, it is true ; and men are assured of God's willingness to make the gift. " Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to *give* you the kingdom." [5] " Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God " ; [6] and who but the Holy Spirit can thus quicken man's vision, and open his eyes to the glories of that wonderful order in which he may find a place ? Yet the Kingdom is the reward of them that diligently seek it. Entrance and progress therein are alike conditioned by human effort, and the way is not an easy one. " Strive to enter in by the narrow door," says our Lord ; " for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." [7] " Narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it." [8] Men are called to a conflict, wherein much that they count dear will be consumed ; they are expressly warned that there is need to wield the sharp sword before they look for the satisfaction of peace ; and it is declared that, through the relentless activity and determined measures to which they will feel moved to apply themselves, the very foundations of their social life may be shaken. " I came to cast fire upon the earth ; and what will I, if it is already kindled ? . . . . Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth ? I tell you, Nay ; but rather division : for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son,

[1] St. Matthew xiii. 44.
[2] St. Matthew xiii. 46.
[3] St. Mark viii. 36.
[4] St. Matthew vi. 33.
[5] St. Luke xii. 32.
[6] St. John iii. 3.
[7] St. Luke xiii. 24.
[8] St. Matthew vii. 14.

and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." [1] And because there is to be a progressive achievement, the Kingdom being initiated here and now, while its perfect realisation lies in the future, those who would set out with the exuberant spirits and light-hearted zeal of the untried novice are warned to prepare for a long and unresting struggle. "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have wherewith to complete it? . . . . Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" [2] "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." [3]

When we seek to determine more precisely the nature of the life to which the citizens of the Kingdom are pledged, we learn that they are characterised by a certain purity, charity, and strength of soul, which begets in them a profound humility and an extraordinary capacity for suffering. A root-power is discovered which inhibits absolutely any selfish ambition, self-advertisement, or vulgar and immoral competitive enterprise. Jealousy and censoriousness, comparison with others to the advantage of self, self-confidence, self-assertion, and self-election to honourable place, are all sternly discountenanced. "He that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." [4] "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." [5] Persecution, slander, and evil treatment of every sort are to be endured not only without vindictiveness and retaliation in kind, but also with earnest prayer and hearty desire for the well-being of the persecutors, and with active beneficence in their favour. "Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." [6] "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." [7]

[1] St. Luke xii. 49–53.
[2] St. Luke xiv. 28–31.
[3] St. Luke ix. 62.
[4] St. Luke xxii. 26.
[5] St. Matthew xviii. 4.
[6] St. Matthew v. 39.
[7] St. Luke vi. 27–28.

Much more is required, however, than an absence of self-assertion and a checking of the spirit of revenge. Our Lord teaches that the fulness of life which He imparts to all who seek His Kingdom is to find outlet and renewal in the ceaseless activity of diligent and faithful service. There is no possibility of a living Christian faith apart from the visible fruit of unselfish action; and many earnest warnings are spoken to those who are self-deceived in this matter. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" [1] "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." [2] The obligations of citizenship are fulfilled neither by an emotional discipleship nor by the passive endurance of evil. There must be also an active service of men, requiring the expenditure of possessions and involving personal discomfort, sacrifice, and self-humiliation.

All that a man has is given to him by God for use. No single talent is to remain unexercised. Both personal gifts and material property are to be accounted a responsibility and an opportunity, requiring to be administered with due regard to the needs of others, in a spirit devoid of arrogant patronage and fearful of applauding publicity. "Give to him that asketh thee." [3] "Sell that ye have, and give alms"; [4] and when bestowing alms, "Sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men." [5] In two parables, those of Dives and Lazarus and The Good Samaritan, our Lord presses home the lesson of the need for this sense of brotherhood and this active participation in the woes of others; and, after an amazing object-lesson of service given under circumstances of singular impressiveness and awe, He teaches the disciples, "If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you." [6]

Sometimes there will be a call for trifling offices so insignificant as to seem beneath the attention of one who is wholly at his Master's disposal. But these are a part of the Christian obligation, and they are not unnoticed by the Lord of the kingdom. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one

[1] St Luke vi. 46.
[2] St. Matthew vii. 21.
[3] St. Matthew v. 42.
[4] St. Luke xii. 33.
[5] St. Matthew vi. 2.
[6] St. John xiii. 14–15.

of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." [1] Every act of service is an act of discipleship rendered to Him in Whom the whole society centres, and is rewarded by the further establishment of that society and the assured participation of the doer of the act. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him. . . . Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." [2] From the offering of a cup of cold water the obligation of service extends over the whole range of life's powers. It may even require the supreme sacrifice of life itself; and to the man who lays down his life for his friends in a love which cannot be exceeded, Christ gives the assurance, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." [3]

In order that men may perform this exacting service the more readily and the more effectively, they must be free from all anxiety and untrammelled by earthly ties. Confidence in God's loving care must be absolute. "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." [4] As a means to spiritual alertness and a disciplined body the practice of fasting is assumed. There must be no yielding to the selfishness and gross impediment of "good living": though a necessary warning is uttered against flaunting such self-discipline in the face of men. "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance." [5] Possessions are not to be allowed to engross the attention and to warp and

[1] St. Matthew x. 42.
[2] St. Matthew xxv. 31–40.
[3] St. Matthew x. 39.
[4] St. Matthew vi. 25.
[5] St. Matthew vi. 16.

destroy the life. "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." [1] Solemn words are spoken against a false confidence in material means of power and enjoyment. "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God"! [2] And the reason is plainly stated. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." [3] "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." [4] Whatever the value or seeming necessity of the possession, if it be found that it checks the activity demanded by the claims of the Kingdom, it must be totally and finally rejected. "If thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off. . . . If thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out." [5] The same decided action may be required in the case of the most intimate friends and relatives, for none must be allowed to act as drags. "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." [6] In short, the Kingdom of Heaven claims absolute right of way in a man's life, and suffers no obstructions to impede its progress. "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." [7]

Now this whole process of self-accommodation to the demands of the Kingdom by the practice of renunciation, suffering, and toil—corresponding precisely with the terms of our definition of asceticism—is summarily described by our Lord as "cross-bearing." "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." [8] In this is summed up all that way of life to which the disciple is called, and failure to fulfil this sole condition involves rejection from the Kingdom. "He that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me." [9] At once we are constrained by the use of this figure to turn from the direct consideration of the ascetic activity of the disciple to the life of the Master, and to look to that life for a clearer understanding of the principles set forth in His teaching. He is *the* cross-bearer; and since by His own

[1] St. Luke xii. 15.
[2] St. Mark x. 24.
[3] St. Matthew vi. 24.
[4] St. Matthew vi. 21.
[5] St. Mark ix. 43–47.
[6] St. Luke xiv. 26.
[7] St. Luke xiv. 33.
[8] St. Mark viii. 34.
[9] St. Matthew x. 38.

words He thus draws attention to the likeness that is to obtain between the disciple's way of life and the path that He Himself follows, we find ourselves forced back to a consideration of the conditions of His life and work. "A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord." [1]

2

The suggestion that our Lord's earthly life was in any degree ascetic is commonly disputed on the authority of Christ's own words. It is pointed out that He accepts explicitly a distinction drawn by others between His own way of life and that of His forerunner.[2] "John the Baptist is come eating no bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a winebibber." [3] It is contended that the contrast was obvious and complete: for Christ wore no ascetic garb; He mixed freely with men, and cast no gloom over their innocent festivities; He sat at meat with them, sharing their ordinary food and drink. He did not require His disciples to observe regular and rigorous fasts such as were then considered to be a necessary practice on the part of those who were more particularly devoted to the religious life; and, when complaint was made against Him and them on this score, He justified the exemption. "Can the sons of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them?" [4]

Yet, when King Herod heard of Him, he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers work in him." [5] The contrast was clearly not so pronounced as to make it impossible for a shrewd observer to suspect a very close connection between the two. If Christ did not wear raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle, it is none the less certain that His dress was simple and without any marks of affectation or extravagant display. "They that wear soft raiment are in kings' houses," [6] was His own hint on this point. If His food was not so plain as the locusts and wild honey that sufficed for the Baptist, yet, again, we

[1] St. Matthew x. 24–25.
[2] *Cf.* A. Harnack, *What is Christianity?* Eng. tr., pp. 81–83.
[3] St. Luke vii. 33–34.
[4] St. Matthew ix. 15.
[5] St. Mark vi. 14.
[6] St. Matthew xi. 8.

cannot for a moment think of our Lord as one who lived delicately. Driven by the Spirit into the solitude of the wilderness He fasted for a long period once at least; and He summed up His attitude towards eating and drinking when He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." [1] There are indications that each meal He shared with the disciples was so hallowed by His solemn benediction, unaffected gratitude, and wholly religious use, as to impart in ever-growing measure the secret of sacramental communion with God. In all His restrained yet glad acceptance of food and drink, He taught that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." [2] If Christ did not live in the wilderness, yet His ways were solitary. While He walked among men, He was separate and lonely to a degree far beyond anything involved in the seclusion of the Baptist. The long hours He spent in solitude when He "went apart to pray," were representative of the separateness which marked His whole course. If He showed in His countenance and words an attractive power of singular sweetness, wholly different from the stern and forbidding aspect of the last of the prophets, yet He, too, was uncompromising and outspoken in the face of wickedness. The hands that caressed the heads of little children and tenderly touched the wasted limbs of expectant sufferers, were capable also of knotting cords for the backs of those who dishonoured His Father's house; and the lips that appealed to the weary to come unto Him and find rest unto their souls could be moved on occasion to speak vehement denunciations of those who bound burdens on men's shoulders and moved not so much as a finger to help them.

A careful investigation of the Gospel story will show that "renunciation, suffering, and toil" is the only adequate formula with which to summarise the life of the ministry; and it will be found, further, that our Lord's asceticism is wider and deeper than that of the Baptist, because His relations with God and man so far exceed those of His herald in point of range and in intimacy of relationship.

When the Baptist's cry summoned Him to the full discharge of that Messianic vocation to which He had long yielded Himself in growing anticipation, Christ laid aside

[1] St. John iv. 34. [2] St. Matthew iv. 4.

the work which guaranteed His independence, and left His home to follow the hard and precarious way of the wandering religious teacher. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." [1] Faithful women ministered to Him of their substance; in addition to such gifts there were perhaps casual earnings brought in by the disciples; and out of this scanty store carried in a bag by Judas, "the one of the twelve," [2] the common needs of the little band were sparingly satisfied, so that there might always be something from which to distribute alms to the poor. That this was our Lord's practice we gather from the statement made in the Fourth Gospel that when, on the eve of the Crucifixion, Judas was bidden to do quickly the work which he had in hand, "some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy what things we have need of for the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor." [3] The fact that the disciples were well accustomed to this use of money is also attested by their remark when they saw what appeared to be an act of extravagance. "To what purpose hath this waste of the ointment been made? For this ointment might have been sold for above three hundred pence, and given to the poor." [4] Sometimes, no doubt, there was but little left to them to be expended on almsgiving; and it may well be that the disciples looked with envy on those rich Jews who were to be seen casting much into the treasury; till Christ drew their attention to the woman who "cast in two mites, which make a farthing," and said of her that "This poor widow cast in more than all they which are casting into the treasury: for they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." [5]

As His ministry proceeded, the abundant evidence of power that was given by our Lord persuaded the people to propose to Him definite offers of leadership. Large numbers of the Jews, stirred by patriotic and religious enthusiasm, desired Him to become their king. Finding Him unwilling, they became more urgent, and pressed on Him the acceptance of what seemed to be the obvious step in

[1] St. Luke ix. 58.
[2] St. Mark xiv. 10.
[3] St John xiii. 29.
[4] St. Mark xiv. 4–5.
[5] St. Mark xii. 43–44.

the development of His plans and the fulfilment of what they judged to be their common desire. But this way, too, He renounced. "Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew into the mountain himself alone." [1] The story of the Temptation suggests that here was a definite act of choice involving the rejection of a course which had its own peculiar appeal. Not the comfort of home, nor the power of money, nor the allurements of popular leadership, could avail to turn Christ aside from His purpose. Only by unflinching renunciation could He carry it through; and in this He was steadfastly faithful.

The programme which our Lord had set Himself to fulfil was found by Him in the prophecies of Isaiah, and announced first in the synagogue at Nazareth, "where he had been brought up." "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," He said, "Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty them that are bruised, To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." [2] All this He summed up at a later date when He declared that His mission was "to seek and to save that which was lost": [3] but no detail of the task as originally conceived was ever forgotten. When He returned answer to the Baptist's messengers He bade them report that He was duly performing all that belonged to the work of the Messiah. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them." [4] With a good conscience He could appeal to the men who threatened Him, and say, "Many good works have I showed you from the Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" [5] and as He hung on the Cross, looking back over the toilsome way He had trodden, He could exclaim with triumphant assurance, "It is finished." [6] The work which He had enterprised had been carried through to the end and was at length perfectly accomplished.

Now this ministry was undertaken and completed with the strongest possible sense of obligation. Like the centurion whose understanding faith won His high commendation,

[1] St. John vi. 15.
[2] St. Luke iv. 18–19.
[3] St. Luke xix. 10.
[4] St. Matthew xi. 5.
[5] St. John x. 32.
[6] St. John xix. 30.

Christ was "under authority." Surveying His work and its issues from the vantage-ground of the Resurrection-day, He put the question, "*Behoved* it not the Christ to suffer these things?"[1] as though He would open the eyes of the disciples to that necessity which had always been understood by Him to govern His activities. As a boy He had said, "Wist ye not that I *must* be in my Father's house?"[2] When He made His way north to Galilee, there definitely to begin His ministry, "He *must needs* pass through Samaria,"[3] though it was customary to avoid the alien people of that country. To Zacchæus He said, "Make haste, and come down"; and then added, "For to-day I *must* abide at thy house."[4] And of all that He set Himself to endure He had said, "The Son of man *must* suffer many things."[5]

So it is that one of the most striking features of the self-denying toil of our Lord is its method. So systematic is He that the impression is sometimes received from the Gospels that all His activities were planned in advance, and a set time appointed for the performance of each. He delays because His hour is not yet come; He seems to be under the necessity of acting in strict accordance with a prescribed schedule. The explanation is to be found in His constant reference to the Father, on Whom He invariably waits. He never betrays impatience; He waits always for the right time; and when that time has come He acts without hesitation or uncertainty.

He journeyed regularly to Jerusalem to keep the feasts, and was confidently expected by the many who for various reasons awaited His coming. His work of teaching and healing was carried out on carefully organised lines. He made circuits through various districts, and dispatched disciples at least twice on carefully prepared mission work. "He went into their synagogues," we read, "throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils,"[6] though men sought to detain Him in this place or that. "Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness."[7] He sent the twelve "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. . . .

[1] St. Luke xxiv. 26.
[2] St. Luke ii. 49.
[3] St. John iv. 4.
[4] St. Luke xix. 5.
[5] St. Mark viii. 31.
[6] St. Mark i. 39.
[7] St. Matthew ix. 35.

And they departed, and went throughout the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere." [1] And afterwards "The Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was about to come." [2] But the system was never inflexible. Christ was ever willing to modify His plans where this was profitable for the Kingdom. Though He expressly confined His ministry to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," [3] He granted the prayer of the Syro-Phœnician woman who showed so great faith. And "When the Samaritans came unto him, they besought him to abide with them: and he abode there two days." [4]

As evidence of Christ's careful economy of time, as well as of the fulness of His working day, we find that "In the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed." [5] St. Mark's characteristic εὐθέως seems to belong not merely to his manner of telling the gospel story but to the substance of the story itself; and it suggests that our Lord's daily life was one of ceaseless activity. He was ever ready to receive people of all classes, and to treat their cases at length. Even the hours of the night were at the disposal of a Nicodemus. During the daytime crowds gathered round Him wherever He went; and at times "There were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." [6] Often we read that "a great multitude followed him." St. Luke tells us that "Many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trode one upon another." [7] On another occasion "He spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him: for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him." [8] Four friends bearing a palsied man to Christ found it impossible to make a way through the crowd that had gathered about Him; in an angry remark His enemies admitted that "The world is gone after him"; [9] and in the stories of the feeding of the five thousand and of the four thousand, "beside women and

[1] St. Luke ix. 2–6.
[2] St. Luke x. 1.
[3] St. Matthew xv. 24.
[4] St. John iv. 40.
[5] St. Mark i. 35.
[6] St. Mark vi. 31.
[7] St. Luke xii. 1.
[8] St. Mark iii. 9–10.
[9] St. John xii. 19.

children," we get some definite indication of the extent to which our Lord was followed, and of the consequent burden that He bore.

As we should expect, there are clear signs of the physical weariness that came to Christ as a result of His incessant and arduous toil. Yet He burned with a fire of energy, and seems to have been possessed of remarkable powers of endurance. When the disciples sought to spare Him, He would not suffer them to prevent the approach of any who needed Him; He vehemently rejected any suggestion of an avoidance of the hardships that lay before Him; and at times He strode onward in His course with a fierce determination which filled His disciples with amazement and fear.

The physical strain imposed upon Christ by the terms of His ministry cannot be rightly estimated, however, apart from consideration of the exhausting spiritual effort which accompanied all His visible activity. The whole of His work rested on a foundation of prayer, and for Him this meant no easy emotional relaxation, but a labour demanding intense concentration of effort. He acted on an unbounded faith in the Father's willingness to hear them that ask and to grant their petitions. "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee." [1] To His disciples He utters His profoundest conviction when he says, "Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have it." [2] Hence we find Him spending long hours together in spiritual wrestling. "After he had sent the mulitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone." [3] "It came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God." [4] Matters of supreme moment affecting the larger issues of His work were thus carefully prepared; and in the same way every anxious detail was submitted to the Father for counsel and for strength. In the hours of the night or in the early morning, while the disciples lay asleep, the Master would earnestly intercede for them, that they might be made strong to endure. "Simon, Simon, behold,

[1] St. Mark xiv. 36.
[2] St. Mark xi. 22–23.
[3] St. Matthew xiv. 23.
[4] St. Luke vi. 12.

Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." [1] And at the crisis of His own conflict with evil He went apart and prayed with such intensity of effort that the life within Him was violently disturbed under the strain. "Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." [2]

Then the teaching given by our Lord to the disciples and to the multitudes that thronged Him daily represents an amount of spiritual labour far exceeding the actual physical effort of speaking in the open air to large numbers of people for a considerable time. The form in which it was delivered suggests for the most part an easy throwing off of a series of stories and of chance comments without consideration or effort, the whole constituting a miscellaneous collection of *obiter dicta* which sprang spontaneously from a peculiarly fertile religious mind. When the whole content is examined, however, there is found in it a comprehensiveness and a balance such as would suggest careful preparation of material as well as a wonderful aptitude in presentation. The teaching was always ready and invariably relevant, but never casual and unconnected. It bears the marks of prayer and study no less than of intuition. Quotations from the sacred Scriptures suggest a constant devotional use of those writings; there was daily meditation on the will of the Father and the needs of men; and thus Christ formulated a rounded whole of doctrine, which He gave out gradually as opportunity permitted, always with the true teacher's regard for fitness, impressiveness, and progress. Under His methodical guidance the inner band of disciples in particular were directed all unknowingly into the fulness of the truth.

Still more exhausting, perhaps, than the toil of the Teacher was the labour of the Healer; for it is not to be supposed that Christ performed His many miracles of healing without real cost to Himself. Not only did He strive in prayer that He might restore mankind to bodily and spiritual health, but in the actual process of healing "power came forth from him." [3] What this meant to the sufferers we know. What it meant to Christ we cannot determine: but it certainly may be held to imply that He healed by making

[1] St. Luke xxii. 31–32.
[2] St. Luke xxii. 44.
[3] St. Luke vi. 19.

expenditure of spiritual energy. The work of overcoming disease was for Him a part of the process of conflict with the powers of evil. He set Himself deliberately to counter the works of Satan and to remove all trace of the ravages made by him. Those who were under the influence of the prince of devils recognised Christ in this capacity and openly declared Him. He Himself expressed His confident anticipation of success in this conflict at the time when " the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in thy name " : for His answer was, " I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." [1] To this end He prayed ; to this end He put forth power, and expelled sin and disease from those that were lying bound in Satan's toils.

Finally, the determination with which our Lord practised renunciation, and the invincible energy with which He carried through His self-appointed task, are to be matched only by the steadfast endurance with which He bore His many and grievous sufferings. For the truth's sake He suffered the alienation of relatives and friends, the hostility of the religious leaders of God's people, and the misunderstanding and defection of His followers. For the love that He had to men He shared all their griefs with the quick warm sympathy of a nature unique in its capacity for fellowship. For the sake of truth and of love He endured the pain of a bitter and shameful death, lifted up on that Cross which stands as the climax and fitting symbol of a heroic life radiant with victory over pain.

But the Cross stands for more than that. It is the badge of fellowship with One whose sufferings are held to be so far in excess of anything man has experienced, that it has been agreed to know Him as " the Man of Sorrows." On what grounds ? it may be asked. Great though Christ's sufferings were, by what right is it claimed that they were unique ? The woes of tens of thousands in the strife of the War may well seem to challenge such a claim, and to challenge it successfully. The torture of a mutilated body lying untended on a field of horror ; the shame of women and the loud agony of little children ; or, in times of war and peace alike, the hopeless pain of victims to cancer and a hundred other ills ; these may well be considered to outdo the pain of crucifixion.

[1] St. Luke x. 18.

The answer is, of course, that a right estimation of the suffering of the Cross involves a full recognition of the Person of the Crucified. So far we have dealt with Christ as though He were but a man in whom humanity rose gloriously to great heights: but we are at length required to take account of the unique quality which invests His renunciation and toil as well as His suffering, by the fact that He is Very God of Very God. "God was in Christ"; and no merely human scale of values will prove sufficient to measure the degree of His asceticism. In the agony of Gethsemane and in the desolation of Calvary there is revealed a certain unfathomable element of suffering, an unintelligible crisis of spiritual agony, which goes beyond the range of man's experience. The Cross is the measure of the sorrows of Christ not simply because in the pain of that death there is a climax to the bodily suffering endured throughout the ministry of the Son of Man; but because it brings to a head, and to a definite and victorious conclusion, that spiritual conflict to which Christ, the Son of God, had wholly committed Himself. It is to be regarded, therefore, as the crown and representative summary both of the work undertaken by God on man's behalf, and of the true and understanding response of the Perfect Man, the incarnate Son of God. In the concentrated form of a single act it expresses the spirit not only of Christ's service of man while He lived in the flesh, but also of the Incarnation itself, whereby it became possible for Him to accomplish that service: and, further, it gives supreme expression to that spirit of sonship which is man's highest glory.

3

Considered as a clue to the character of God and the true nature of the divine operation, first of all the Cross reveals a God whose power of sacrifice is the most amazing of all the wonders that are encountered in the contemplation of the Divine Being. In the likeness of Man He surrenders Himself to the treachery and rude assault of men; He consents to be stripped and fastened by His creatures; He suffers death to lay its hand upon Him, and goes out as a thing accursed. By an absolute and bewildering contradiction of human expectation God

shatters man's conception of omnipotence, and re-interprets almightiness in terms of self-abasing love. He elects to enter unreservedly into those limiting circumstances which have resulted from the activity of evil wills deriving their power solely from Him. He sacrifices Himself utterly in a new and costly enterprise, undertaken in response to a challenging situation, and involving the unqualified acceptance of conditions imposed by creatures to whom He has given the power of self-determination.

So lowly is the state of the Sufferer, so tragic His humiliation, that men have been led reverently to posit some reduction of the Being of God in His accomplishment of the Incarnation. Christ, it is thought, must have laid aside some of those powers which belong to Him in His eternal glory. By an act of immeasurable self-sacrifice He must have divested Himself of certain divine attributes ere He came down to dwell as Man among men. Christ Jesus, "being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself." [1] Thus did God make His great renunciation. But over against this there is the fact that Christ was never less than divine. While it is true that St. Paul is not alone among the writers of the New Testament in his suggestion of a kenosis, it is also true that, for all alike, Jesus Christ is Lord. And the laying aside of attributes is clearly incompatible with the retention of identical personality.[2] It cannot be possible (this may be said without presumption), that God should ever really empty Himself of any part of His Personality; even as it is impossible that any human being should will to become in his personal operation something less than he essentially is. God does not act a player's part in the incarnate life of our Lord, projecting into the time-process a mimic and imperfect representation of His real Self. Nor is He animated by a foolish chivalry which refuses to use every legitimate weapon and to put forth all possible power against His adversary. He is seriously committed to a real conflict in which the conditions are not directly of His making. They are such as to impose on Him the

[1] Phil. ii. 6.

[2] *Cf.* H. R. Mackintosh, *The Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 477. "To talk of the abandonment of this or that attribute on the part of the Eternal Son is a conception too sharp and crude, too rough in shading, for our present problem."

necessity, the genuine necessity, for a sacrificial process of so radical a character that man has seemed to see God as something less than God, and yet by this means has been made to know wherein God's divinity truly lies. God does not reduce Himself, but He exerts His saving power on the plane of human life, suffering direct contact with sin, and of set purpose exposing Himself to the full force of its shame and destructive power. God was in Christ in all His fulness. And we are on sure ground when we endeavour to work back to the mind of God from our knowledge of the mind of Christ; while it is at least precarious to attempt to supplement the revelation of Christ by the speculations of philosophy and to add to Him that which seems to be necessary to make up the fulness of the invisible and almighty God, in order that we may subtract it when we choose to declare the manner of the Incarnation.

The sacrifice of the Cross is one with the sacrifice of the Incarnation and with the whole creative activity of God. It implies no diminution of Godhead or abandonment of power, but a yielding of Self to the extreme demands of an invincible Love. The divine Love eternally begets related activities in the creation which proceeds from it by an inherent necessity, and at all costs it voluntarily adapts its operation to the requirements imposed by those activities, in the process of achieving its indefeasible purpose. God has not merely accomplished a single supreme act of sacrifice: but by that one outstanding deed He has revealed to men the cost of that whole process of redemptive creation which is His glory, and He has declared the invariable sacrificial character of the ceaseless outflowings of the divine energy.

It follows that the Cross reveals a God who is not immune from pain. Laying upon Himself the burden of the whole world's sorrow, He suffers together with His creatures, at their hands, and yet on their behalf. So daring is this thought, too, that men have feared to ascribe to Divinity the possibility of being subject to suffering. Or at the least they have considered it necessary to remove the Father beyond its reach, and to regard the sorrows of the Son as His peculiar offering whereby the propitiation of the Father was duly effected. But God is One, and the eternal distinctions which are revealed within the Godhead are not such

as to admit of the idea of independence of experience. Indeed this would involve a complete contradiction of our Lord's teaching. It is God Himself who suffers, and none other: not merely the human body of an indwelling but separate and unassailable Spirit: nor the Son alone, in distinction from the Father and the Holy Spirit.[1]

This is not to say that it was God the Father who became incarnate and hung upon the Cross. But it is to recognise the truth that the Incarnation effected no cleavage between the Father and the Son. They maintained their perfect communion in the bond of the Holy Spirit; and that unity of will and that fellowship of experience which was theirs before the Son took on Him the form of man was preserved unbroken. "God so loved the world that He *gave*"; and God is said to have *sent* His Son into the world. Yet, because of the identity of the will of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, the Incarnation is rightly represented as the voluntary act of the Son effected by the operation of the Holy Spirit. God the Father is not actually crucified; yet neither does He stand afar off, beholding the scene with detachment. Nor is His suffering merely sympathetic. Great as would be the agony of a loving father who surrendered his willing son to a painful and shameful death, it but faintly suggests the intimacy of suffering of which the Triune Personality of the One God is capable. It is the One God, the whole God, who knows the agony, and the analogy of father and son carries us only a part of the way in an attempt to grasp the nature of the communion of suffering which belongs to the Divine Being.[2]

It may well be that the real truth underlying the thought

[1] *Cf.* H. M. Relton in *Church Quart. Rev.*, July, 1917. "We may dare to say that not God's Impassibility but His Passibility is the central truth of His inmost Nature revealed in the Calvary Sacrifice."

[2] *Cf.* H. Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, p. 453 f. "If as regards the sufferings of humanity in general we can say that in all our affliction God was afflicted, then surely we may say the same in a pre-eminent sense of the sufferings of Him whom 'the Father sanctified and sent into the world.' If we cannot intelligibly say that the actual sufferings of Christ—sufferings of a kind which necessarily imply humanity—are literally the sufferings of God, we may in quite sober earnest say that the suffering Christ reveals a suffering God."

of divine impassibility is to be found in the suggestion that God eternally triumphs over pain even while He endures it.[1] In our human experience it is sometimes possible to taste the fruits of victory in the tensest moments of suffering sacrificially borne; and there are found noble spirits akin to God, with "eyes such as one sees only twice or thrice in a lifetime, full of suffering, full also of the overcoming of it."[2] The pain is neither banished nor reduced, but mysteriously negatived. It is present, but without power. So it is conceivable that in the experience of God the very real pain to which He is committed by the exercise of His unbounded love is ever swallowed up in victory. His loving purposes are countered by the work of His own hands; He knows all the bitterness of unrequited love and the full distress of evil opposition. But he has within Himself the assurance of ultimately compassing that which He has undertaken, and, for the joy that is set before Him, He endures gladly, slowly winning order and fellowship out of the confused elements of an ignorant but determined resistance, and capable at every stage of realising for Himself the full measure of His assured triumph.

Once more, the Cross reveals a God who labours for the realisation of his plans, and is found to be "mighty in operation." The cry "It is finished" announces the accomplishment of a task rather than release from suffering. It is the victorious proclamation of a Maker who tells forth with deep satisfaction the fulfilment of His self-appointed toil. There was, of course, no novelty in the demonstration of the truth that God is a worker. Man's earliest thoughts of Him were as of One who puts forth superhuman power. But the revelation of the Cross in this regard lies in the fact that God transforms man's supreme blasphemy into the consummation of His own desire by a seeming passivity which suggests the negation of all power. The divine toil appears to consist in refraining from action, in meekly, even tamely, bearing the brunt

[1] See B. H. Streeter, *God and the World's Pain*, in *Concerning Prayer*, p. 29. "If Christ is truly to us the portrait of the unseen God, the Crucifixion is not merely an event which happened once during three hours of time, it stands for something which is eternal in the life of God—but so also does the Resurrection. Therefore everlastingly in the life of God 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

[2] Dr. John Brown, *Rab and His Friends*.

of man's violence, and being overcome. Yet there is an unhesitating declaration of victory; and, as time goes by and men see the fruits of that victory, they are forced to the conclusion that instead of passivity there was an exercise of power in a sphere transcending that in which physical force is the arbiter. And, further, they are constrained to link that particular act with the whole chain of divine operation, and to re-interpret the process in the light of its teaching. The proclamation from the Cross is seen to declare not merely the end of Christ's earthly labours, but also the achievement of the final stroke whereby the long toil which man has come to know as the evolutionary process has been brought to a triumphant issue. From the beginning God has accepted limiting conditions; from the beginning He has been acquainted with grief; and under those disabilities and through those pains He has carried forward His work patiently and persistently, towards the accomplishment of His unchanging purpose.

It would seem to be impossible for us to appreciate the real nature of the divine working before the appearance of man. Whether we think of a transcendent God moulding the universe from without, or of an immanent God giving direction from within to all the succeeding movements by which progressive order and abundant variety of life have been produced, it is beyond our powers to discover why the way should have been so long and so full of struggle. What is it with which God is forced to contend in a world of His own making? The malevolence of evil spirits is a possible answer; but, if it is to serve at all adequately it must be admitted to such a degree as to bring us perilously near to dualism, which is a mode of thought forbidden to the Christian. The suggestion of "an internal or original limitation of Power" is perhaps nearer to the truth.[1] The facile construction of a world where evil and struggle are unknown is possible only to the amateur who draws his plans with very imperfect knowledge. God builds on the basis of reality, working on necessary lines, and providing in His scheme for the gradual elimination of untoward factors which *in the nature of things* assert themselves in connection with the exertion of beneficent power. The upward course is achieved only by a slow process of patient

[1] H. Rashdall in *The Faith and the War*, pp. 94 ff.

handling, every progressive modification being brought about by unremitting effort and purposeful guidance, each stage constituting a fresh application of the saying, "Behold, I make all things new." [1]

By the creation of human beings endowed with the power of effecting modifications according to their own desires the divine task is very greatly increased in a perfectly obvious manner. God's Spirit now strives with man's spirit, and the Cross reveals the full intensity of the strife. The record of Genesis has been commonly understood to mean that God ceased from toil at the very beginning of man's history, and that He has rested from that time onward. The weekly day of rest observed by the Jews was to them a constant reminder of God's *shabbatha* and of His promise that, if they would observe the covenant relation, they should themselves enter into that rest. But our Lord revised this conception when He said, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work"; [2] and we guard ourselves in consequence against any such absolute interpretation of the Heavenly Session of the Ascended Christ. There is a sense in which it may be said that God rests, but it is not yet the rest which follows on the perfect completion of a task. The Genesis story must be regarded as proleptic. It tells of the creation of sinless human beings, as though God had already achieved that which is His final purpose; and then it legitimately indicates the divine satisfaction as a state of rest. So, too, we may understand that our Lord sits in glory at the right hand of the Father, not because He has ceased to labour on behalf of men, but because His toil has entered on a new phase, and because it moves on steadily and certainly towards an end already guaranteed.

But if God is still wrestling with an imperfect world, and has not yet attained that full satisfaction of achievement which alone deserves to be called rest, is it not necessary to recognise God's present imperfection? It is being urged in various quarters that God's rest or perfection is dependent upon the consummation of the world's progress, and that so long as the world is engaged in hammering out its destiny God Himself is only in process of becoming. It cannot be considered satisfactory to reply that the eternally perfect God limits Himself in creation, and then works off the

[1] Rev. xxi. 5 [2] St. John v. 17.

limitation by the process of redemption, thus achieving a seeming self-development. For this is to ignore the undoubted fact that Christ achieved a perfection which represents something more than His pre-incarnate state. He took up into vital union with the Godhead a new creation, namely, the firstfruits of glorified, perfected humanity. There is certainly development, or rather increase. But it is a development of God and His Creation, not of the Divine Being. God's *work* grows, but not God Himself. The divine toil is the self-expression of a perfect Personality. God works towards a goal which is the outcome of His own life, a goal which He has Himself appointed; and the divine relation to the process and the result is therefore quite other than the human. Man works towards the same end, in so far as he does what is right: but the goal is accepted, not determined by him. He has been made for this particular end, to attain his perfection along this particular line. He *seems* to devise it, but only because he was created for it. The goal takes its origin in the mind and eternal purpose of God: but man's ideal is only a copy of and a response to God's. The one is original and creative; the other is derived and responsive. So that, while the world goes forward and man draws ever nearer to his destined perfection, God is Himself unchanged and His perfection is at all times absolute. His purposes grow under His guiding hand not without that constant exercise of renunciation, suffering, and toil, which proceeds from perfect Love, but without modification or development of His essential Being.[1]

[1] *Cf.* P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, p. 336. "On the one hand we have an initiative, creative, productive action, clear and sure, on the part of the eternal and absolute God; on the other we have the seeking, receptive, appropriative action of groping, erring, growing man. God finds a man who did not find Him, man finds a God who did find him. We have the self-complete God who cannot grow, in whom all things are already, Yea and Amen; and we have the inchoate man who must grow, and stumbles as he grows; and yet, as the *living* God, He has in His changeless nature an eternal movement which He implanted as growth in the creature He made in His image. And on the other hand we have this waxing man, who only grows into the personality that communes with God. He grows through the moral exercise of that passion for the Absolute and Eternal which is so much more than God's return upon Himself because He does not return void but laden with free souls for His sheaves."

4

Not only does Christ's asceticism, reaching its climax in the Cross, reveal divine renunciation, suffering, and toil, however, but, as we have seen, it is also the perfect human response to the divine activity in complete understanding of the ideal by which it is inspired. We may regard it, therefore, as declaring the true ideals of man's asceticism and as carrying it all, wherever it is in any degree true, to its perfect issue. And, apart from fanatical practice, it is scarcely possible that man's asceticism should ever be entirely devoid of truth. Even in its most mistaken forms it contains within itself an ineradicable element of the divine. Man stumbles in the dark; he misunderstands his desires; he abuses his powers and misdirects his energies: yet he was made in God's image, and he is drawn on by a divine leading. His movements are in some measure reciprocal to the divine activity; there is always the possibility of correlation between the human and the divine; and man's limited ideals and perverted purposes will find their true significance by the side of Christ's perfect response to the divine purpose. Without this it is not possible to bring together understandingly the prodigal variety and confused opposition of man's ascetic practices: but the ideal and purpose of the divine renunciation, suffering, and toil, is the original, the inspiration, the counterpart, of man's asceticism, and, therefore, the key to its interpretation. Possessed of a true appreciation of the divine ideal which necessitates the sacrifice of the Cross, we may hope to gain a systematic view of man's manifold ascetic activity, and so to provide both interpretation and criticism of its various forms.

Now the purpose of the Cross is, in one word, redemption. God renounces, suffers, and toils, in order that He may redeem man from the false and perilous position in which he has placed himself, and bring him to his perfection. Man was made for emancipation from all limitations through voluntary co-operation with his Maker. God contemplated the perfection of each individual soul by an education which should conduct it into the way of a full and glorious liberty. But man failed to follow the path of fellowship, and was found suffering the disastrous results of his own wrong-doing. Not only was his true development checked, but

there were deplorable developments in wrong directions. God's purpose was, therefore, to re-create man, to bestow upon him once again that possibility which he had refused. Man's need was faith and power, that he might enjoy the divine fellowship. But fellowship with God is the condition of faith and power. The rejection of fellowship must be cancelled, then, so that, by virtue of fellowship, the righteousness which comes of fellowship may be accomplished.

The ideal to which Christ responds on man's behalf and in his name is thus seen to be threefold. There is to be an effecting of vital fellowship, an assurance of increase in the fruits of fellowship, and, as the condition of the first and the necessary accompaniment of the second, the removal of the offence of sin. In his own best interests God requires of man fellowship instead of independence, righteousness instead of lawlessness, and self-oblation instead of rebellion: and in order to render it possible for man to fulfil these obligations of his nature He offers Himself, through the fellowship of the Incarnation, in fulfilment of His own righteousness.

The very close relationship of these aims is obvious. They constitute a threefold ideal rather than three separate ideals; and it will be found that in many religions and in the asceticism of many individuals all three are in operation. But commonly there is an emphasis, if only temporary, on one of the three aspects of the complete ideal, and it will be convenient to attempt a classification of asceticism on this threefold basis. We shall look first for mystical asceticism, by which men strive to effect their deliverance from existing limitations and to claim entrance into a freer and nobler fellowship, with whatever ulterior purpose; then for disciplinary asceticism, which men practise in their endeavour after righteousness; and finally for sacrificial asceticism, by which men hope to make independent or co-operative reparation for the trespasses which they have committed.

CHAPTER IV

THE MYSTICAL IDEAL—FELLOWSHIP

I

THE intimate conjunction of the human and the divine effected by the Incarnation of the Son of God was rendered possible by the fact that an essential kinship already existed between them, awaiting its perfect realisation.[1] That kinship has declared itself throughout man's history by creating in him an enduring desire for God, and by moving him, not infrequently with a strong urgency, to search out God, to commune with Him, and in some way to find union with Him: and men everywhere have striven to satisfy this deepest and truest craving of their nature by the practice of an asceticism which may be called "mystical," since it is undertaken as a means of initiation into the mysteries and privileges of divine fellowship.

This fellowship is variously conceived. It is sought by men generally as a present sustained association, dependent upon the establishment and maintenance of sympathetic relations: and by specialists as a series of fitful invasions by which from time to time men's bodies are "possessed" by the divine at will, or as a continuing process of self-emancipation, culminating in the complete absorption of man's individual personality in the All, or, again, as a rarely-accorded ecstatic communion enjoyed by the human spirit as a divinely permitted favour after due self-preparation. Where this ecstatic union is sought, the soul prepares itself for deliverance from its material habitation and from sense-perceptions so that it may sometimes be caught up in and

[1] *Cf.* H. M. Relton, *A Study in Christology*, an able treatment of the doctrine of the Enhypostasia, which is "rooted and grounded in the belief that there is an essential affinity between the human and the Divine" (p. 229).

wholly absorbed by the Divine Being, yet not so as to suffer annihilation, but rather to experience intense joy and to be restored to the world of sense with heightened powers. Where earthly existence is regarded as both an illusion and an unmitigated evil, and God is conceived as the source and final receptacle of all spiritual life, asceticism is practised for ultimate deliverance from the one and absorption into the other. Fellowship with the divine is then measured in terms of the supernatural power or enlightenment possessed by the ascetic, these marking by their degree the stage reached in that process of deification which is consummated in the disappearance of the individual self. Seekers after "possession" practise asceticism for the complete surrender of self and the temporary supersession of the human spirit by the invasion of a spirit from without, so that the spirit in possession may use the bodily powers of the ascetic for the purpose of declaring his will or imparting other desired information. Sympathetic fellowship, in which the ascetic realises the satisfaction of a sustained communion based on similarity of experience and state, is sought through a process of self-assimilation to God, or to human beings with whom fellowship is desired.

This sympathetic type of fellowship results from kinship, whether of blood, intellect, or soul, and again from likeness of condition; and it is promoted by association. It is experienced in various degrees of intensity by the members of a family, a tribe, a nation, or a race; it links together those who share the same status and occupation, the same standard of education and the same general outlook; it unites those who are animated by the same moral and spiritual ideals. And it is intensified by continued association in daily toil and in the satisfaction of bodily needs, by a common experience of joy and sorrow, and by exposure to a common danger. It may be a quietly operative sympathetic bond, which, while it is by no means permanent and indestructible and of unvarying power, is experienced as a generally even condition of unanalysed satisfaction, consciously remembered only when it has been temporarily heightened or interrupted, or when its existence is threatened; or, resting upon a foundation of essential moral and spiritual kinship, it may be more self-conscious and more variable in its operation, more deliberately sought and enjoyed, more understanding in promoting its own increase.

Indicating by its appearance the present existence of a measure of kinship in the individual by whom it is felt, it prompts him to strengthen that kinship by a process of moral and spiritual assimilation to those whose fellowship he has already begun to enjoy, and, where possible, by entering into intimate association with them. The process of assimilation may be undertaken by the individual himself, or, with his consent, it may be performed by those with whom he seeks to be associated; more commonly it is a joint operation; but in any case it is essential, and it frequently involves asceticism. The seeker after sympathetic fellowship with the divine must assimilate himself, or be assimilated, to that which he believes to be true of the divine character. He who would associate himself in this way with certain of his fellow-men must not only be prepared to undergo assimilation to their condition and standard, but, when they are grouped in an organised body and he seeks admission to that body, there must be a ready acceptance on his part of the added necessity of providing evidence of his possession of the required affinity with the members of the body, of genuine desire for fellowship, and of willingness to serve the interests of the body by observing its rules.

If a man desires fellowship with those who are in a position of spiritual privilege by reason of their maturity and possession of knowledge and power, he must either mature his strength by self-effort or submit to be made strong by them; if he seeks to enjoy the company of the pure, he must either establish his own purity or be willing to receive it as an imparted gift; and if he would know fellowship with the suffering, he must himself suffer and be willing to share the sorrows of those with whom he desires to be joined. These are the three types of sympathetic fellowship which lead to asceticism.

The seeker after sympathetic fellowship with the Source of all power and enlightenment may attempt to make direct approach through an independent process of self-preparation, or, finding a group of his fellows already in enjoyment of that favour, he may endeavour to achieve his end by association with them. These strong and enlightened ones, through whom he normally accomplishes his purpose, may be the whole of a given social group, or a part of such a group, or a small number of specially endowed individuals. That is to say "church" and "state" may be identical, or there may

be a " church " or a part of a " church " within the " state," while a comparative few may constitute a " ministry " or enjoy a specially privileged membership. In all cases alike they are believed to have a special knowledge of the mysteries of the other world, to be able to hold converse with it, and to know how to avail themselves of supernatural power.

At rudimentary stages of culture the mysteries, which are closely guarded by the initiated, include the real names of the gods, mythical history, theogonies and cosmogonies, together with details of various tabus, marriage laws, and other moral and social obligations, and the practice of various arts. The special power of the initiated is conceived both as augmented natural physical force and as magical ability in respect of healing the sick, rain-making, bringing success in hunting and fishing, and a hundred other matters. At more advanced stages religious knowledge includes personal knowledge of the Deity as well as moral and theological doctrine, and the conception of power is wholly changed. God's might is moralised, and man's endeavours to enter into sympathetic fellowship with Him and His people are modified accordingly. Physical courage and maturity of bodily power give place, as pre-conditions of fellowship, to moral appreciation and right desire; and discipline preparatory to the exercise of wonder-working power becomes intellectual and spiritual preparation for gifts to be bestowed for the promotion of moral conduct.

Candidates for fellowship with the strong may be adolescent members of the group, claiming for the first time to succeed to their spiritual inheritance by reason of their approach to maturity; or they may be adults from another group, seeking to transfer their allegiance; others again may be lapsed or excommunicate members, qualifying for readmission to their group by accepting the discipline that is imposed upon them by authority; and yet others may be postulants for the ministry or for some other specialised order within the group. In each case admission involves the satisfaction of the members of the group as to the fitness of the candidates, and, commonly, the candidates' complete assimilation to the group by the imparting of enlightenment and strength by some means in the power of its members.

Among peoples of the lower culture the religious unit is a close corporation made up of the men of the tribe together with its gods and spirits. These constitute the central

fellowship, in which the children have no share, and to which, as a rule, the women are only more or less loosely attached. When a boy reaches the age of puberty he becomes a candidate for admission to this tribal fellowship, and is then required to endure some harsh treatment at the hands of his seniors, as a means of purification from the supposed infectious taints of his former condition and for the avoidance of evils that are believed to attend his passage from one status to another, but more especially as a test of his fitness for fellowship and as a magical means of imparting manliness.[1] Whatever be the conception in the minds of those who inflict the treatment, from the point of view of the candidate it is an ascetic approach to membership in a religious corporation; and he is almost invariably found willing to accept it with readiness, because it is to him the price of that sympathetic fellowship with the men and gods of his tribe into which by reason of his growing maturity he has already begun to enter, and whose consummation he keenly desires.

In British Columbia boys preparing for initiation were whipped daily during a period of seclusion, and were encouraged to gash themselves with knives; in New Guinea they were beaten with clubs and severely wounded; while

[1] E. Durkheim is probably correct when he says (*The Elem. Forms of the Rel. Life*, p. 314 f.), "Many of the rites practised on this occasion consist in systematically inflicting certain pains on the neophyte in order to modify his condition and to make him acquire the qualities characteristic of a man. . . .'In a general way, all the exercises to which he is submitted have this same character to such an extent that when he is allowed to re-enter the ordinary life, he has a pitiful aspect and appears half stupefied. It is true that all these practices are frequently represented as ordeals destined to prove the value of the neophyte and to show whether he is worthy of being admitted into the religious society or not. But in reality, the probational function of the rite is only another aspect of its efficacy. For the fact that it has been undergone is proved by its producing its effect, that is to say, by its conferring the qualities which are the original reason for its existence."

Cf. H. Webster, *Prim. Secret Societies*, p. 35. "It is most likely that in many cases what we regard as merely tests of courage and endurance were once of deeper significance and were imposed originally for religious or magical purposes."

A. van Gennep suggests that in some cases the intention is to destroy forcibly the old life which is being abandoned. "Il convient de noter que la flagellation ou les coups servent dans quelques cas (Liberia, Congo) de rite matériel de séparation par rapport au monde antérieur, frapper équivalant alors aussi à couper ou à briser" (*Les Rites de passage*, p. 249).

in Guiana their manliness was proved by slashing their breasts and arms with wild boars' tusks or with toucan bills. Among Californian tribes it was the custom to sting a boy's naked body with nettles, and then to lay him on the nest of a virulent species of ant, so as to cause fearful agony; and, if this torture provoked a lad to betray any sign of suffering, his initiation was deferred until he could stand the test. In some places failure involved instant death. In the Bondu region of West Africa boys were made to pass through a narrow pit smeared with vegetable juices which burn the skin; the Nandi beat their boys with stinging nettles and drop hornets on their backs. An extremely painful test was used by the Cheyenne Indians: on reaching the age when he might be admitted as a warrior, a youth was fastened to a post by thongs of raw hide passed through incisions made in his pectoral muscles; he was then required to free himself, either by resting his weight on the thongs and allowing them to break through by suppuration in the course of a day or two, or by deliberately sawing to and fro until they had worked through.

Ordeal by fire is a widespread custom. Australian tribes "roast" boys in front of a large fire, or make them stand in a dense smoke, or throw burning embers on them. In some cases the boys are thrown on to green bushes which have been placed on the top of a large log fire, and are required to lie there for four or five minutes, nearly stifled by heat and smoke, though protected from being actually burnt. In Borneo the women used to test lads by placing a lighted ball of tinder on the arm and letting it burn into the skin.

As a general rule all these tests are endured patiently and even cheerfully, as a necessary condition of fellowship with the tribal deities; and, while it is probably true that the appeal to the youth's incipient manhood is in itself a strong factor apart from the religious significance of the initiation ceremonies, that significance is always sufficiently marked to give them an ascetic colour from the standpoint of the initiates.

Admission to the secret societies which are so general among peoples of the lower culture is frequently conditioned by tests involving much suffering. These societies exist for a great variety of purposes, but the basis of their organisation is usually religious, and severe ordeals are, as a rule, imposed upon those who seek the more intimate fellowship with the

gods and the special knowledge and power which are available for members of the societies. Extremely painful tests spread over a period of two weeks are imposed by the Mwetyi Society of the Shekani and Bakele tribes in West Africa, a society which is joined by the great majority of the men; candidates for the Malanda Society among the Batangas are severely beaten with rods, as are also the candidates for the Dukduk Society in Melanesia; and in Polynesia there was a long, complex, and painful initiation to the society of the Areoi.

The initiation ceremonies undergone by adolescents and by candidates for admission to a secret society are brief and merciful, however, compared with the austerities which are sometimes required of would-be medicine-men, shamans, and priests. In order to attain to that degree of intimacy with the gods and power over the spirits which is necessary for their work, they must commonly spend a prolonged period, sometimes lasting for years, in seclusion, during which they practise bodily discipline with the utmost severity. By this means they become godlike in their own estimation and in the eyes of the people, and, assisted by the regard of those who credit them with the possession of supernatural power, they believe themselves to be in a permanently sympathetic relationship with the spiritual powers to whom by their own exertions they have assimilated themselves.

It is to be noted that over against the suffering of the candidates in initiation ceremonies, asceticism is sometimes required of the seniors whose function it is to impart strength to them. Thus, when a lad of the Dieri tribe of South Australia is to be initiated, "the men, old and young, except his father and elder brothers, surround him, and direct him to close his eyes. One of the old men then binds the arm of another old man tightly with string, and with a sharp piece of flint lances the vein about an inch from the elbow, causing a stream of blood to fall over the young man, until he is covered with it, and the old man is becoming exhausted. Another man takes his place, and so on until the young man becomes quite stiff from the quantity of blood adhering to him. The reason given for this practice is that it infuses courage into the young man." [1] So also, in place of drawing power from the gods, it is sometimes believed to be necessary

[1] A. W. Howitt, *The Nat. Tribes of S. E. Australia*, p. 658.

to strengthen them in order that they may be able to exert the activity which is expected of them. When men gash themselves with knives before their gods, the intention is not to excite pity but to effect union and to lend strength by offering the life that is in the blood. Before beginning war or any important undertaking the Mosquito tribes of Central America drew blood from their tongues and ears ; [1] Aztecs gashed themselves when appealing to the Earth-goddess ; Roman priests cut their shoulders and sprinkled the blood on the image of Bellona ; just as the priests of Baal sought to help their unresponsive lord by this means when they contested the claim of Elijah.

In the higher religions there is usually little that may be called asceticism in the preparation required for admission to full membership. Generally, however, there is a course of instruction in which intellectual effort is demanded according to the powers of the candidate ; observation of conduct, involving moral effort on his part ; and training in habits of prayer. In these matters a certain standard of attainment is looked for. If, for example, a Parsi child fails to show a proper sense of moral responsibility and is unable to comprehend the significance of the *Naojote* or initiation ceremony when he has reached the age of seven, the proceedings are postponed, but they may not be deferred later than the age of fifteen, lest he should be claimed by the Evil Spirit. Certain prayers must also be learned by heart before the child may be admitted. In Christianity the completion of the twofold rite of initiation by the confirmation of the child baptised in infancy is marked by a considerable variety of requirement ; but, when the ordinance is regarded as necessarily involving the moral and spiritual participation of the candidate, self-preparation is required, with sufficient evidence of earnestness and fitness.

The admission of adult members from other groups is far less common among primitive peoples than among peoples professing a more developed form of religion ; but in the former case as in the latter a modified form of the procedure adopted in the initiation of youths is enforced. The restoration of lapsed or excommunicate members frequently involves a considerable measure of asceticism, but it is of a

[1] This may have been done, however, with the object of magically augmenting their own strength.

confused type, being probably more largely penitential and disciplinary than mystical. Yet there can be no doubt that the Christian who was "under discipline" according to the Church's ancient rule, though he was chiefly required to give proof of his penitence and to suffer himself to be disciplined against a repetition of his offence, was prompted to fulfil his appointed sufferings largely because he desired restoration to fellowship and this was the only means by which it could be had.

Ordination to the priesthood in the higher religions and admission to monastic and other orders is commonly preceded by a testing of vocation which involves some measure of ascetic preparation and endurance; but, as in the case of admission to ordinary membership, there is less of self-assimilation in this than of discipline, assimilation being effected by some religious ceremony. In many of the darwish orders admission is conditional upon ability to recite the *fatiha* a great number of times with a very small expenditure of breath, a feat which requires considerable practice. Subsequent advancement is also made to depend upon increased proficiency in the same accomplishment. Among the Parsis the first rite of initiation, to the grade of *Navar* or *Ervad*, is largely a test of the fitness of a candidate to follow in the steps of his father.[1] He must remain in retreat during the whole of the month which is occupied by the ceremony, taking his meals at fixed times after prayer, and sleeping on the floor. Towards the end of the time only one meal a day is permitted to him, in order that he may prove that he is able to control his body in respect of food and drink, and therefore, as it is supposed, in all other matters.[2]

Self-assimilation by purification is undertaken as a means of safety in the case of those who among peoples of the lower culture are passing from one status to another, and as a ritual preparation for approach to the Deity at every level of religious development. The transition from one group to another within a tribe is considered to involve an accompanying change of supernatural influence in the life of the individual concerned. The operation of passing is, therefore, dangerous, unless the person is prepared for the conditions of the new life into which he is entering by being carefully

[1] The Parsi priesthood is strictly hereditary.

[2] See Jivanji Jamshedji Modi in E.R.E. vii. 326 f., and J. H. Moulton, *The Treasures of the Magi*, p. 136 f.

purged of those influences which have previously attended him. Fasting is observed for this purpose before a lad is initiated, before admission into a secret society, and before or at the time of marriage. Among the Macusi Indians a man must abstain from meat for some time before his marriage; the Thlinkets required both the man and his bride to fast for two days after marriage, then to take a little food, and then to fast again for two days; and among the Wa-teetas in South Africa newly-married couples are forbidden to eat food for three days. Initiation into many of the primitive mysteries requires such a drastic preliminary purification that it is represented as a symbolic process of death. The fellowship is conceived as one of superior spiritual condition: when it meets for ceremonial observances masks are worn as an indication of the fact that the members enjoy a higher life and are at one with the spirits. Novices must, therefore, die and be born again before they can be safely received as members. In Melanesia the candidates were daubed with clay, charcoal, mud, or filth, at the beginning of the ceremony of initiation, and were required to let this remain on them as a sign of their death until the end, when it was washed off and they came forth "clean," having put off all trace of the old life.[1] Among the tribes on the West Coast of Africa candidates are hidden in the bush for a time, and on their return to the village they have to feign ignorance of their language, their friends, and every familiar object, and to pretend that they do not even know how to eat. After a few days they begin to make rapid progress in their education, and the process of assimilation to the new life is held to be complete.

Beating or scourging is sometimes employed in the same connection as an additional means of purification, and is found even in the elaborate ritual, known as the *rajasuya*, that is prescribed for a ksatriya king who desires paramountcy. In order to purge the king of his sins and fit him for his new dignity he is to be beaten with sticks by the priests, who then proclaim him Brahman, Savitr, Indra, or Rudra.

Those who are specially set apart to perform magical or religious rites are frequently required to practise celibacy, not for the sake of freedom from domestic care or for bodily

[1] R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*, p. 87, says, "They come out black with dirt and soot, and are not to be seen till they have washed."

discipline, but because the married state is held to be less pure than the single and therefore less helpful for those whose duty it is to maintain close touch with the gods. Preparation for particular acts of ministry also involves purification, which is generally accomplished by means of fasting; and in this the ordinary worshipper is required to share. The Natchez Indians fasted for three days and took an emetic before beginning to observe a harvest festival known as the festival of New Fire, when maize was offered on the altar of the Sun. Prior to certain religious feasts the Caribs were accustomed to purify their bodies by purging, blood-letting, and fasting, while the natives of the Antilles dared not approach the sanctuary until they had cleansed themselves by provoking an attack of vomiting. Before the sacramental eating of new crops the Creek Indians fasted strictly for two nights and a day, and then drank a bitter decoction in order to purge their bodies. At their yearly gatherings to light the sacred fires the Comanches used to take "medicine" for purification, after which they fasted for seven days. Among the Tlingits, who believed in reincarnation, a girl was made to fast for eight days after a death had taken place, in order that she might be purified in readiness for the returning spirit, which would take up its abode within her. Indian tribes commonly believed that by continence, bathing, fasting, and the use of emetics, a man became "clean" and capable of winning good fortune for himself.

Similarly admission to the mysteries usually involved forms of purification, which were sometimes ascetic. Even here, as Dr. P. Gardner says,[1] "We must not suppose that, in origin, these ceremonies arose out of a sense of guilt or unfitness for converse with the gods. At first the uncleanness from which they liberated men was only formal, and the rite partook of the nature of magic. But by degrees more lofty conceptions made their way into men's minds; and it is to be supposed that many a votary of Cybele or Mithra may have looked back on the blood-bath as marking his entry into a better state of existence." The sacramental meal that figured in the Mithraic ritual was prepared for by various austerities, including prolonged abstinence.[2] Modern Jews fast from ten o'clock in the morning before eating the

[1] *E.R.E.* ix. 81.

[2] *Cf.* F. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, p. 160 f. "The sacramental collation was accompanied, or rather preceded, by other

Passover; and in the Christian Church fasting has been practised consistently from early times as a preparation both for Baptism and for the Eucharist.

In all this work of ascetic purification two mingled errors are either present as accepted principles or lurking dangerously near at hand. One is the belief that evil spirits are able to gain entrance to the body by means of food; the other is the idea that all matter is essentially evil and that every bodily process is impure. If purity is sought, the body must therefore be cleansed, flogged, and purged, food must be withheld, and sexual relations abjured. Such discipline undoubtedly produces an effect upon the spirit, and at those levels of religious development at which it is commonly practised for purification, it must be held to possess considerable value. But when the conceptions which underlie it are outgrown, and it is known that purity is the state of the soul that is delivered from sinful activity, it is necessary to accept such discipline, if it is to be profitably retained, on another basis than that of direct purification. Thus in the Christian Church it ought to be plainly recognised everywhere that there is vocation to celibacy, and that some, priests and people alike, are called to the practice of such renunciation and self-discipline as are involved in it for them; but it is less than Christian to suggest for a moment that, while the celibate life is pure, the married state is impure, or, at the most, less pure. Again it is generally right and helpful that the sacraments of the Church should be duly prepared for in accordance with the ancient discipline of fasting; but it is merely pagan to gauge the fitness of the recipient chiefly by reference to the time at which he last partook of food.

Admission to higher status by assimilation to the strong and to the pure is frequently accompanied by a further requirement of pain-bearing through the marking of the initiate's body with a permanent badge or token. The purpose of this is to declare to the world at large, and sometimes more especially to the powers of the next world, the fact that a person belongs to a particular group, to which he

rites of a different character. These were genuine trials imposed upon the candidate. To receive the sacred ablutions and the consecrated food, the Participant was obliged to prepare for them by prolonged abstinence and numerous austerities; he played the rôle of sufferer in certain dramatic expiations of strange character and of which we know neither the number nor the succession."

is bound by certain obligations and in common with which he enjoys certain privileges.

In Australia the practice of the aboriginal tribes of the eastern and south-eastern coasts is to knock out a front tooth when the lad is initiated, or later. The gum is first loosened from the jawbone in order that the jaw may not be broken, and the tooth is then chiselled out with a piece of wood, generally the sharp end of a spear, which is driven home with a heavy stone. The lad afterwards wears the tooth suspended from a necklace. Some Africans do the same thing, the Bakotas in particular having a practice of knocking out the upper front teeth so as to be like oxen, as they say; but it is more usual for Africans to file the teeth to sharp points. The Mang'anja chip their teeth in order to make them resemble the teeth of a cat or crocodile. The Ovaherero and kindred tribes break out the four lower front teeth when a child is from eight to ten years of age,[1] and file the corresponding upper teeth into the shape of triangles with the base downwards.

Scarification, cicatrisation, branding, and tatuing now commonly possess an ornamental value, and are undertaken for the satisfaction of personal vanity; but originally they seem to have indicated kinship with a god, and this significance is still retained among some peoples. The final initiation ceremony of the Urabunna tribe in the north of Central Australia consists in making a series of cuts according to a set pattern on the neck and back of each candidate in commemoration of certain events in the Alcheringa or mythical period.[2] Among the Ba-Mbalas and many other African peoples scars are made on the faces and bodies of

[1] See G. McC. Theal, *The Yellow and Dark-skinned Peoples of Africa South of the Zambesi*, p. 212. A. C. Hollis, in *The Masai*, p. 313, quotes Hinde (*The Last of the Masai*, p. 42), who says, "The origin of this custom is supposed to date back to a time when tetanus was a great scourge amongst the Masai, and they discovered that it was a comparatively simple matter to feed a man suffering from lockjaw if two of his front teeth were missing." Another explanation given by Hollis, in *The Nandi*, p. 82, is that "the soul leaves and returns to the body (in sleep) through the gap caused by the extraction of the middle incisor teeth of the lower jaw." Both of these attempted explanations seem to have been devised by the natives in order to account for a custom the true ground of which had been forgotten.

[2] See B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Northern Tribes of Cent. Aust.*, p. 335, and *Across Australia*, i. 24–28. Also A. W. Howitt, *The Native Tribes of S.-E. Aust.*, p. 659.

initiates. The Abipones make their tribal marks with thorns and rub ashes into the wounds.

Californian tribes used to mould a figure of the *manitu* seen by a lad during his initiatory fasting, place it on his breast and there set fire to it so that the image was branded indelibly. In Southern India branding is practised by certain sections of the Hindu community, the Chakra, or "wheel of the law," being marked on the right shoulder. The branding is done by means of a brass or copper instrument which is well heated for a strong youth, allowed to cool somewhat for a weaker boy, and pressed against a wet rag before being used in the case of an infant.

It was the custom of the Polynesians to tatu the bodies of their boys and girls as they came of age, the figures used being generally those of animals and having relation to the totem-god either of the individual or of his tribe. Initiates were treated as tabu while their wounds were healing, because it was considered that they had been touched by the god acting through his priest. To die before being tatued involved certain rejection by the gods, since union with them was held to be dependent upon receiving their mark. When a Polynesian became a Christian it was said of him, "He does not tatu himself any more." Eskimos tatu their boys by means of a needle and thread dipped in soot; Fijians were accustomed to use the thorn of the orange tree and powdered charcoal to tatu the thighs of girls who had reached the age of puberty; and some of the forest tribes in Northern India still tatu their girls at that age.

Circumcision is practised by most African tribes, North and South American Indians, Australian aborigines, Polynesians, and some Melanesians, and is found sporadically elsewhere. Its original significance in each place is highly problematical, but it has frequently come to denote a special relationship between the individual suffering the operation and the god in whose name it is performed.

With the advance of civilisation the marking of initiates is either robbed of its painful and ascetic character, as in the case of the painted caste-marks of Hindus,[1] or the suffering

[1] So also, "The original custom of branding the pilgrim with the sacred symbol of the god as a proof that he had performed the pilgrimage is now often superseded by a mark made with moistened clay. But in S. India, among the Sri-Vaisnavas and Madhavas, the visitor to the monastery (matha) is branded on both shoulders" (E. Thurston, *Ethnog. Notes in S. India*, Madras, 1906, p. 403 f).

associated with it is transformed in its character, as in the case of the Christian sign of the cross made upon the brow at Baptism and wrought out in the life of the individual, who is able to say with St. Paul, "I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." [1]

Sympathetic fellowship with the suffering stands apart from the two sections already considered, in that it is almost exclusively associated with Christianity whether by direct or by indirect influence. It is to be recognised as a marked characteristic of the modern world. When men are faced with signs of distress, they not only suffer in beholding with sincere pity the sorrows of their fellows, but they quite commonly insist upon sharing those sorrows, whenever it is possible to do so, in a practical way. Cynics may deny this, but public acts of spontaneous sympathy and generosity give the lie repeatedly to their sneering assertions of man's incurable selfishness, and the half is not told. So general is this spirit of humanity that many are accustomed to regard it as the most natural thing in the world. They feel that there is no need to seek for an explanation in the inspiration of religion; they are satisfied that sympathy and kindness are present in human nature, ever ready to make immediate response to the appeal of suffering. It is true that human nature is thus gifted; but it is equally true that it includes an extraordinary capacity for selfish indifference and utter callousness in the presence of the most cruel suffering borne by others, and that before Christianity came into the world there was a far greater display of this than of the other. Strong human affection existed, without a doubt, and suffering was gladly shared by some in every stage of culture; but, generally speaking, sufferers were held to be dangerous, or burdensome, or, at the very best, far less attractive than the strong. The modern spirit is due to the spread of the religion of Christ, the very genius of which is to be found in the mystery of suffering and the joy of suffering shared.

Hitherto the gods were generally believed to be immune

[1] Gal. vi. 17. Suso, and others after him, have reverted to primitive custom by cutting the name of Jesus upon their breasts; and candidates admitted to the penitential society known as Los Hermanos Penitentes receive some half-dozen incisions, made with a flint, in the shape of a cross just below the shoulders. See *The Cath. Enc.* s.v. "Penitentes."

from suffering, and the suffering that was often involved in their worship was not undertaken in sympathy. In the cult of the goddess Atargatis at Hierapolis, and in the worship of Attis, self-emasculation was practised by young men at the conclusion of a frenzied dance as a means of consecration and assimilation to their deities; and sympathetic fasting seems to have been practised by various peoples at times of special suffering or on anniversaries of the same; but the latter was less for fellowship than for propitiation or magical obtaining of advantage, while the former was highly abnormal and eccentric. It is paralleled in later times by the conduct of individual Muslims during the Muharram festival. "The religious zeal of these people," says Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali,[1] "is evinced, likewise, in a stern, systematic, line of privations, during the period of Mahurrum; no one is obliged by any law or command; it is voluntary abstinence on the part of each individual—they impose it on themselves, out of pure pity and respect for their Emaums' well-remembered sufferings. Every thing which constitutes comfort, luxury, or even convenience at other times, on these occasions is rigidly laid aside." And, further, at the public recitation of the record of the events which are being piously remembered, the martyrdom of 'Ali and his two sons, Hasan and Husain, "I have even witnessed blood issuing from the breast of sturdy men, who beat themselves simultaneously as they ejaculated the names 'Hasan!' 'Hosein!' for ten minutes, and occasionally during a longer period." [2]

Christianity, however, is altogether centred in One who suffered, and in Him not merely as Perfect Man and supreme Teacher of moral truth but as the Crucified. To enlarge on His ethical teaching and to propose Him as the living embodiment of the principles which He taught is a necessary part of the presentation of the Gospel; but, if this is done to the exclusion of the Cross or even its displacement from its central position, it represents a serious perversion of Christian truth.[3] Writing to the Corinthians,[4] St. Paul declares his

[1] *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India*, p. 24.

[2] Ib. p. 22. *Cf.* E. Sell, *The Faith of Islam*, p. 355.

[3] The question whether Christianity is Christocentric or Staurocentric seems to have no meaning where Christ is regarded as the Crucified. Where He is not so regarded, a Christocentric Christianity as opposed to a Staurocentric Christianity would be merely an Ethical Christianity, evacuated of its essential power.

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

intention to refuse to allow himself to be turned aside from the delivery of the essential Gospel which was entrusted to him, by any temptation to deliver a reduced message in terms of a merely ethical and philosophical appeal. And for St. Paul, as for every other understanding Christian, the acceptance of the crucified Christ as Lord meant not simply a self-satisfied assurance of personal redemption through His sufferings, but an enduring relationship, an ever-deepening gratitude, and an acknowledged necessity for undergoing a process of conformity to His likeness. Immediately after his conversion he was shown "how many things he must suffer." [1] Having become a lover of Christ, he must suffer together with Him, mysteriously realising through this fellowship of suffering both the redemption and the conformity which are yet of Christ alone.

By some Christians the joy [2] of suffering is so acutely realised that the desire for suffering becomes a strong passion. "Suffering alone can make life tolerable to me," says St. Teresa. "My greatest desire is to suffer. Often and often I cry out to God from the depths of my soul, 'Either to suffer or to die is all I ask of Thee.'" Suso pleads with Christ, "Teach me, my only joy, the way in which I may bear upon my body the marks of Thy Love." The members of the Franciscan Order, following the example of their founder, have preserved an unbroken tradition of passionate devotion to the suffering Christ, which has been fostered by love-songs written in honour of Christ's love in the Passion, and is characteristic of the Order to this day.

There is here a danger of extravagance, it is true; and some of the great ascetics can by no means be wholly acquitted of it. A desire to bear the sacred stigmata imprinted upon the body may lead to an unhealthy emotional attitude towards Christ and a dangerous morbidity of mind: while an unchecked passion for suffering may well give rise to such a constant seeking after new forms of mortification and such an increasing scale of severity of practice as to lead rapidly to a futile cult of pain. "The basis of Suso's actions

[1] Acts ix. 16.

[2] *Cf. The Sadhu* (B. H. Streeter and A. J. Appasamy), p. 34. "How sweet it is to suffer for His sake": and the comment, "The notion that suffering is a privilege, in so much as it is an opportunity of sharing an experience of Christ and helping on His work, is as fundamental to the Sadhu as it is to St. Paul."

is neither the averting of wrath nor the acquirement of merit, but, however pitifully misinterpreted, that which is the basis of all true mysticism—the love of God, shown in his case in the passionate yearning to share in the sufferings of his suffering Lord." [1] But, as the same writer observes, "The self-mortification by almost incredible austerities described in the life of Henry Suso belongs in the last resort to the sphere of morbid psychology rather than of religion." In addition to wearing a nail-studded cross between his shoulders, a hair shirt, an iron chain, and an under-garment studded with nails "pointed and filed sharp," which "always turned towards the flesh," "he bound a part of his girdle round his throat, and made out of it with skill two leather loops, into which he put his hands, and then locked his arms into them with two padlocks, and placed the keys on a plank beside his bed, where they remained until he rose for matins and unlocked himself. His arms were thus stretched upwards, and fastened one on each side his throat, and he made the fastenings so secure that even if his cell had been on fire about him he could not have helped himself." [2] Such conduct is not to be justified on any sane reading of Christianity. It represents the distressing aberrations of a true lover of Christ who has suffered the very intensity of his love to disease his mind and to distort its proper expression. But there is another side to this sympathetic association through pain. It is wrong to suppose that all fellowship with the sufferings of Christ should take a "useful" form, and that social service, however strenuously and at whatever cost it is performed, is invariably to be commended, while the mystic's passionate concentration on the five wounds of his crucified Lord is always a regrettable and wasteful luxury of sorrow. The crucifixion itself was not obviously a form of service to the human family. Yet we believe it to be of unique importance, by far the most significant act in the whole course of human history. In its practical results it has so far exceeded any action deliberately undertaken for man's material welfare that comparison is out of the question.

[1] C. Jenkins in *Med. Contributions to Mod. Civ.*, p. 74. As Suso himself tells us, "He now began every night after matins at his usual place, which was in the Chapter-room, to force himself into a Christlike feeling of sympathy with all that Christ, his Lord and God, had suffered for him." (*Life*, p. 41.)

[2] *Life*, p. 48.

It is necessary, therefore, to remember that "spiritual" is not opposed to "practical," but to "material." The work of practical beneficence is carried on in both the spiritual and the material spheres; and that which is transacted in the heavenly places is certainly not inferior in efficacy to that which is performed in the sight of men, though its results are less calculable. The prayer-life may not be ruled out on the score that it is not possible to prove conclusively that it produces any material results; neither may intensive meditation on the Passion of Christ, and suffering enterprised through sympathetic fellowship with Him be dismissed as useless merely because it is not obvious service rendered by the mystic to his fellows.

It must be added at once that the great mystics were usually people of much practical common-sense and overflowing energy, and that many of them served their generation nobly.[1] For love is the inspiration of service, and the secret of love is learned in that intimacy of communion with our Lord which is permitted to those who share His sorrows and are thereby assimilated to His true likeness. These men and women find Christ in every sufferer, and are united in sympathy and devotion to all whose lives are sorrowful. To serve them is to serve Christ; and to suffer with them is to suffer with Christ. Every mission of service they undertake is a means of drawing nearer to the heart of the Man of Sorrows. "I did not enter upon the life of a Friar," says Brother Stokes, a recent example of this spirit, "with the idea that it might be the solution of any of our difficulties in the Indian mission-field. The desire to imitate Christ and to suffer some few of the hardships undergone by Him mainly influenced me to take this step."

By requiring all its members to company with the

[1] *Cf.* E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 210. "All records of mysticism in the West, then, are also the records of supreme human activity. Not only of "wrestlers in the spirit" but also of great organisers, such as St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross; of missionaries preaching life to the spiritually dead, such as St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius Loyola, Eckhart, Suso, Tauler, Fox; of philanthropists, such as St. Catherine of Genoa; poets and prophets, such as Mechthild of Magdeburg, Jacopone da Todi and Blake; finally, of some immensely virile souls whose participation in the Absolute Life has seemed to force on them a national destiny. Of this St. Bernard, St. Catherine of Siena, and the Blessed Joan of Arc are the supreme examples."

suffering Christ during Lent and Passiontide in each year, the Church provides that every Christian shall learn to enter into the world's sorrows with understanding and ever-deepening sympathy, endeavouring in fellowship with Him who alone makes such action effective to bring relief by prayer and by service.

It remains to be observed that the sympathetic fellowship which is purchased at the cost of a varying measure of asceticism on admission to a group is maintained also by the asceticism of a disciplined association with the members of the group, the extent of the discipline varying very greatly at different stages in the development of religion. In primitive societies fellowship with the tribal gods is entirely conditioned by membership in the tribe and participation in its corporate acts of worship. Blood-relationship and assimilation by initiation at the age of puberty are the almost invariable conditions of admission to full membership; conformity with the social and religious practice of the group is the condition of continuance in it and in the privilege of fellowship with its gods. This relation with the gods is not a personal relationship, nor is it capable of any subsequent development, except in the case of the few, such as the medicine-men, who cultivate a special association. From the time of initiation until the death of the ordinary initiate it remains dependent upon the maintenance of sympathetic fellowship with the other members of the group, and is precluded from increase by means of independent action, since that is forbidden both by the spiritual immaturity of individual members and by the complementary existence of an exceedingly strong community sense.

By degrees, however, as society develops, the individual conscience advances in its perception, personality grows, and a personal relationship with the gods springs up inside the group religion which has produced it. In national religions the preservation of unity is assisted by the many forces which hold the members of a nation together; but direct sympathetic fellowship is found by some to be possible without the aid of religious group fellowship, and is perhaps felt to be less formal, more vital, and more satisfying. There arises a tendency also for the group to become less and less an exclusive corporation based on blood-relationship or nationality, and to grow increasingly into a voluntary association of those who believe alike and find it agreeable

and helpful to maintain their religious life by means of organisation. The voluntary basis of such societies is emphasised when, through the clash of individual consciences, the main body is split up into sects. Islam and Protestant Christianity both illustrate this stage of development in the sympathetic relationship existing between the individual and his God. Catholic Christianity, though it precedes these in the date of its origin, yet represents the highest stage of development in fellowship, in which the individual relationship and the group relationship are both found in a highly developed form, co-ordinated and equally maintained by a sacramental bond of association. The group and its Head are no longer, as in the first stage, distinct, in the relation of Owner and owned; nor separate so that the individual conscience is free to reject the group in favour of the God, as in the second case; but they are sacramentally identified. The whole body of initiates is the Body of Christ, the Church, the extension of the Incarnation, vitalised by the Life-principle which is the Holy Spirit. The assimilation of every member of the Body to the Lord who is its Head is at once direct and indirect, being conditioned by personal relationship to Christ and by fellowship with the corporate union of those who make up His Body: so that the profession of Christian discipleship apart from Church membership is not possible. All are united to Christ and to one another in growing intimacy by their active participation in that sacramental system of association whereby strength, and purity, and capacity for sacrificial endurance of suffering are promoted. The Holy Spirit, abiding in every member, effects in all a continuing process of growth unto perfection and a constantly increasing sense of fellowship.

But this sacramental association is necessarily governed by disciplinary regulations, within the power of the Society, involving an asceticism of conformity, of self-subordination, and of humility. Every breach of the law of charity is a double breach of fellowship; it interferes with the continuance of a right relationship with God and with the group. It must be healed, therefore, with reference to both. The absolving power and the disciplinary power committed to the Church must be recognised, so that sympathy may be re-established and restoration to fellowship gained. Perfect fellowship with Christ waits on the consummation of that universal fellowship which is the ideal of the Catholic Church.

It is to be realised in anticipatory measure by the loyal acceptance of the discipline of sacramental association by all its present members; but it cannot attain its full measure of value until the discipline which conditions it is accepted by all, and the Church has become, in fact as in ideal, One and Catholic.

2

The three remaining types of fellowship to be considered differ from sympathetic fellowship in that they are available only for specialists whose range exceeds that of the ordinary members of the community. At low levels the god or spirit with whom fellowship is enjoyed is thought of as temporarily taking up his abode within the privileged person; at higher levels the human personality is conceived as being either merged completely in the divine so as to lose all separateness, or admitted to occasional ecstatic communions of a peculiarly intimate nature.

Abnormal physical and psychical states, when witnessed in those who are intoxicated or emotionally excited, or again in those who have fasted for a prolonged period, suggest to peoples of the lower culture the temporary "possession" of the human body by supernatural spirits.[1] Incoherent speech, wild bursts of mad laughter, rolling on the ground, and bodily contortions, ending in utter prostration and unconsciousness, are thought to indicate clearly the assumption of control by spirits to whom the human body has been compelled to yield itself. Either the person is "possessed" of devils, or, according to the Greek term, he is in a state of "enthusiasm," that is, he has a god within him. But "enthusiasm" no longer conveys this original meaning, and it is convenient to use "possession" to denote the supposed presence of a controlling spirit or spirits, whether good or bad.

Primitive peoples, quick to grasp at every advantage in their dealings with the spirit-world, commonly choose as medicine-men, shamans, and priests, those who are

[1] *Cf.* J. Roscoe, *The Baganda*, p. 288. "Fits were regarded as the outcome of ghostly possession; the sufferer, during a fit, was left alone, and any person who had been with him ran to a safe distance, lest any of the afflicted person's saliva should fall upon him, and he should be infected."

epileptic or otherwise plainly subject to possession; and they require them to cultivate and intensify by the practice of austerities the gift they already possess. Those candidates for the office who have not such powers by nature, strive to acquire them artificially, or at least to simulate them, by the same means as those by which the others bring their natural powers to perfection; so that voluntary possession gradually takes its place by the side of involuntary possession, and spirit control can be arranged for whenever it is desired. The Bilqula, a South American tribe, seem to be peculiar in that they do not consider it possible to acquire the art of shamanism by fasting or any such discipline. It is in their opinion a gift obtained during illness by the power of the deity known to them as Snq.

Possession confers various advantages. The most highly valued of these is the power of exorcism. It is believed that the exorcist is permanently in alliance with the spirits of evil, and can call them to his aid so as to deal effectually with any offending spirits of disease. In a case of sickness among the South American Indians, for example, the medicine-man, becoming possessed as a result of his own exertions, quickly ascertains the nature of the cause of the trouble and drives out the demon from the sick man's body. In Southern India the exorcism of spirits has been reduced to a system and is widely practised, most kinds of disease being regarded as within the power of the professional exorcist when he has worked himself up into a state of possession.

In India also the exorcist is looked to for authentic announcements from the spirit world at the various religious and domestic rites; for this is another important benefit to be derived from possession. He decides the right name for a child at the time of name-giving, when he has learned the pleasure of the spirits. Sometimes he is required to discover the perpetrator of the witchcraft that is suspected as the cause of certain ills. On such occasions the *bhagat*, or devotee, of the wandering Banjaras in the Deccan throws himself into a state of possession and utters oracles inspired by Mariyai or Mahakali, who is believed to have entered into him. On this authority the person indicated by him is either killed or required to commit suicide.[1] Japanese

[1] See W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the N.-W. Prov. and Oudh*, i. 152 f.

Shintoists were accustomed to deliver spirit-messages when in a state of *kangakari*, or god-attachment, which is the same as possession. Zulus have a special class of diviners, taught, they believe, by the *amatongo* (ancestral spirits) who "walk" in their bodies. And so, generally, the most popular and the most reliable method of divination has been that of consulting the inspired or possessed mouthpiece of the gods or spirits. His abnormal condition, produced by his ascetic preparation, guarantees the source of his communications.

The exorcist and the seer do not always seek possession, however, merely because it brings them power through their ability to satisfy the needs of those who resort to them. Though they are very far removed from the Christian mystic who enjoys ecstatic communion with his Lord, they have this in common with him, that their action is partly impulsive, and that, in so far as it is deliberate, they too are sometimes moved by a desire to enjoy the experience of invasion by a higher life. In this activity to which they give themselves they succeed in transcending the normal levels of human experience; and the erroneous theory which they hold no more invalidates this fact than it proves that Christian mysticism rests upon an equally false supposition. The medicine-man and the mystic alike experience, though with a vast difference of quality, an emotional satisfaction which is considered sufficient in both cases to justify their arduous self-preparation and exhausting self-surrender.

The first essentials in the work of self-preparation for possession are detachment and discipline. Separation for limited periods is almost invariably required of those who would see into the secrets of the other world; and among some peoples even regular hermits are to be found, dwelling alone upon the mountains or in the wilds. Such recluses were consulted on matters of importance by the Peruvians and by the Eskimos, because they were known to be subject to the frenzy of possession as a result of their solitary lives. Many mortifications of a painful nature are contrived for the discipline of the body, the commonest and most efficacious of all being fasting. For fasting serves a double purpose. It subdues bodily desires by gradually inducing a state of weakness, and at the same time it produces psychic conditions which are favourable for the

receiving of revelations.[1] The recollection of the experiences resulting from involuntary fasting in time of famine or in sickness has no doubt been frequently responsible for the voluntary adoption of the practice by sorcerers when similar experiences were desired; but it could not fail to establish itself everywhere as a normal and traditional method. The priests of the Santals, an aboriginal tribe dwelling on the Orissa coast, give forth oracles when they are in an ecstatic state induced by long fasting. Tibetan Buddhist monks selected for the work of exorcising evil spirits invariably prepare themselves for their duties by abstention from food: and the low unorthodox Buddhist priests, shamans rather, who practise the animist rites of the Bonist cult for the purpose of sorcery, make the same preparation. A sorcerer among the Roro-speaking tribes of New Guinea, wishing to find a magical snake-stone, fasts for a fortnight, living on only a few roasted bananas, in order that he may learn in a vision where to look for it. American Indians believe that visions are not only for experts, but that they may be seen by all who fast, and they require every boy to fast in seclusion until he sees and recognises his *manitu*, or guardian spirit. An Indian will fast in order to learn whether his hope of having a son is to be gratified, and again in order to learn the destiny of the new-born child. Candidates for the office of *keebit* were required to fast for some days, sitting on a tree overhanging a lake, striving to look into the future. There is thus a very general agreement with the Zulus, who say that "the continually stuffed body cannot see secret things."

Another method of seeking possession is by intoxication, a practice which probably has a twofold origin. The state of intoxication is sufficient in itself to suggest an abnormal condition somewhat closely akin to that of a person subject to hysteria, and equally to be regarded,

[1] *Cf.* A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast*, p. 150 f. "In regard to possession, the priests seem to be fully aware of the fact that an empty stomach is productive of hallucinations and mental aberrations; hence persons who wish to consult the gods are enjoined to fast, while drugs are sometimes administered as well. The honest priest, in a condition of morbid exaltation produced by these means, firmly believes, I think, that he is inspired by a god, when, wound up to a great pitch of religious enthusiasm, he makes those utterances which are regarded by the bystanders as the words of the god."

therefore, as indicative of possession. But further support for this interpretation was found in the fact that trees and plants were worshipped as spirits. Intoxication produced by the consumption of leaf or juice or any part of them would certainly be construed as evidence of the entry of the plant-god into the consumer. To become possessed, therefore, it was necessary to become intoxicated. Asceticism is not invariably discoverable in this practice; indeed, it might well be supposed that this was very obviously an anti-ascetic method. But, when it is remembered that vinous exaltation is but one part of a widespread practice of intoxication which includes also drugging and inhalation, it will be conceded that the element of enjoyment is often excluded, and that, on the contrary, the performer must be credited with a truly ascetic acceptance of painful experience in pursuit of his object.

When a cure is to be worked by a medicine-man among the South American Indians, he will take quantities of snuff, drug himself liberally, and intoxicate himself by furious smoking. It is true that he gradually accustoms himself to this by increasing the dose systematically, but it is very doubtful whether it can ever become agreeable to him to do these things. Among certain Indians in Guiana it is the custom to drink strong tobacco-juice. North American Indians produce cerebral intoxication by a similar use of tobacco, coca, the maguey, the chucuaco, and *Iris versicolor*, with the same undoubtedly disagreeable effects, in order that they may receive revelations, even as the Pythia at Delphi, after preparatory fasting, chewed laurels, drank sacred water, and inhaled the vapours of the chasm. In Eastern Bengal the shaman prepares for his work of exorcism by fasting a whole day and then drinking or smoking various intoxicating preparations made from the hemp-plant. Siberian shamans habitually use the fly-bane (*Amanita muscaria*). A variant of this method of producing a state of possession is the revolting practice of eating poisonous and disgusting food and drinking blood in order to make direct appropriation of an invading spirit or simply to create an abnormal spiritual condition. In parts of Melanesia it was the custom to seek communion with the ghost of a deceased person by eating his flesh. In Malabar the Odi magicians believe that they acquire power by eating filth. Indian devil-dancers become

possessed by drinking the blood and eating the raw flesh of a sacrificial animal, and by lacerating themselves and drinking the blood that runs from their wounds. In just the same way bulls were eaten raw in Crete, Bacchants in Thrace tore bulls to pieces and fed upon them, and Semitic peoples renewed fellowship with their god by sharing with him the animal they had just slain in his honour.

Auto-hypnotism, again, by wild dancing leading to frenzied movements and raving utterances, is frequently practised as a means of effecting union with the gods, sometimes in association with the use of intoxication.[1] The worship of Dionysos, for example, was both orgiastic and inebriating. His votaries were accustomed to roam on the mountains by night, crying aloud upon their god, brandishing torches, and leaping wildly in exhausting dances until they became frenzied. Greek initiates of this cult, at a later date, retained the practice of dancing and added music to it. After a death and on certain other occasions among the Wa-yao and Mang'anja of the Shire Highlands, which lie between Lake Nyasa and the Zambesi, an inquiry is held by a diviner, who is usually a woman. At the place where the death has occurred she dances madly until she has worked herself up into a state of delirium, when she is believed to be under the influence of the *masoka*. Among the South American Indians when the medicine-man is preparing to effect a cure, he will produce a kind of ecstasy by making weird music, singing and dancing for hours together. Gradually he passes into a state of trance: and when he recovers, he relates in detail the visions he has seen.

Dancing and bodily contortion are widely practised in India as a means of producing possession. Sometimes the dancer will wrap his head in a cloth, leaving a small

[1] Among the Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast "dancing is a special branch in the education of a priest or priestess. They must be very proficient in the art, and they are taught privately by adepts for many months before they are allowed to perform in public. The dance is always performed to the sound of drums, and it is during it that a priest is possessed by a god, and lets fall oracular utterances. By the violence of the exercise they work themselves into a state of extreme excitement, and, staggering hither and thither, with eyes rolling and mouth foaming, appear to be lost to all consciousness of their actions" (A. B. Ellis, p. 121. And see pp. 132–138).

open space at the top of the head, by which the god whose visit is anticipated may enter. When possession has taken place, he speaks to the bystanders from the pit of his stomach, and the message is received as from the invading deity. In the Eastern Panjab the exorcist lashes himself with a whip as he dances, and announces the divine communication only after he has developed a perfect paroxysm of dancing and head-wagging. In Southern India malignant spirits are sometimes enticed from a sick person into the exorcist by his dancing. The Kurs or Muasis of Chota Nagpur depend upon their *baiga*, or priest, for communication with the evil spirits they worship. They assemble under his leadership and make music and frantic dancing, while he invokes the spirits: one by one they become possessed, and declare the fact to the others by the wild rolling of their eyes and the spasmodic twitching of their muscles.[1]

The history of Christianity itself is not free from the record of reversions to this hysterical quest of religious experience. In the early age the Montanists combined introspection with asceticism and violent physical exertion; and in the Middle Ages there were frequent epidemics of the dancing mania, the Flagellants in particular giving extraordinary demonstrations of uncontrolled fervour, leaping violently and continuously and lashing themselves unmercifully. At an uncertain later date a Russian sect of *Khlysti* (flagellants) appeared, calling themselves *Lyndi bozhii* (men of God), practising fasting and celibacy, and using ecstatic methods of worship, including dancing accompanied by flogging, which produced much prophesying. Small communities of these people still exist in Russia, and continue the same practices.[2]

3

The ultimate basis of thought upon which oriental mysticism rests is the Indian theory that mundane existence involves the separation of the *atma* (soul, self, or spirit) from the *brahma* (Absolute All-Being), which is its true home. Existence in the flesh fetters the soul to earth

[1] For a detailed description of such dancing among the Veddas see C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*, Ch. ix.

[2] See an account by K. Grass under the heading "Men of God" in E.R.E., and his book *Die russischen Sekten*, Leipzig, 1907.

and prevents the perfect consummation of the individual spirit, which is union with, or rather absorption into, the Absolute Spirit. This enforced and painful detention is conceived, further, as continuing not merely for one life but through a whole series of lives: for, when death turns to decay the prison-house of the spirit, that spirit is re-born in some new shape, higher or lower according to its *karma*, that is the desert of its former life, and it is a matter of great difficulty to effect the *moksa*, or release, of the spirit, and bring its prolonged wandering (*samsara*) to a happy conclusion.

To this end three separate methods are practised in India to-day, the first two sometimes in conjunction. They are known as *karma-marga*, or the way of works; *jnana-marga*, the way of union by self-knowledge gained by exercises in meditation; and, with less of thought and more of feeling, *bhakti-marga*, the way of faith or devotion. Only the second of these requires consideration here, for the third has no asceticism, and the first has for its ideal not fellowship but reparation.[1] The *tapas* which was originally practised in order to achieve automatically a state of god-likeness akin to possession,[2] came to be regarded later, when the *karma* doctrine had established itself, as a means of cancelling the accumulated balance of past evil action, without, however, altogether losing its original significance: so that those who practise it are to be thought of as penitents, of a sort, and as more or less vulgar seekers after magical power, rather than as mystics in any sense of the word.

While the pessimistic philosophy outlined above provides the general scheme of thought on which sadhuism rests, the two most important practical factors contributing to the supply of recruits for the large army of sadhus in India are, no doubt, weariness of life resulting from the

[1] See Ch. VI.

[2] "It was held in India from Vedic times onwards that *tapas* (originally 'burning glow,' but afterwards used of fasting and other forms of self-mortification) worked out its effects by itself, without the intervention of any deity. This is only the more remarkable since it is almost certain that in India, as elsewhere, the ecstatic state of mind which rendered such austerity possible was originally often regarded as due to the inspiration of a spirit. But it is, so far as I know, never mentioned that the supernatural effects of the austerity were due to the spirit from whom the austerity came. The effects were due to the austerity itself." T. W. Rhys Davids, *Cosmic Law in Anct. Thought*, p. 9.

innumerable petty burdens imposed upon men by the rules of the caste-system, and the great power of the ascetic and the honourable regard in which he is held. The average Hindu ascetic seeks first deliverance from the tiresomeness of life as he knows it, and possibly the satisfaction of a more adequate religious experience; then, more remotely, deliverance from the necessity of being born again when death has released him; and finally, without the least enthusiasm, ultimate absorption into the Eternal Spirit.

The first task imposed upon those who would seriously give themselves to the work of breaking the chain laid upon them is that of purgation. Whether the intention be to adopt the way of works or the way of meditation, it is necessary to go forth from the world of men to a life apart, laying aside possessions and every worldly entanglement and care, and, in the freedom thus gained, to subject the self to a stern discipline of suppression by the constant checking of desire. This "going forth" is a real separation from others, though the sádhu continues to appear in public places. It means the adoption of a unique profession, which invites the deepest reverence and ungrudging support but not companionship: and in many cases it certainly does involve true renunciation. Home, relatives, and friends are abandoned, and the ascetic yields himself to a lonely pilgrimage of quest. The subsequent discipline of suppression undertaken by him varies greatly according to the sect he joins; but at least it is necessary to lead a simple life; while the self-denial to be practised by some is regulated with a degree of detail which suggests the most irksome thoroughness.

Actual physical purgation is undertaken by many sadhus in a number of ceremonies which involve painful and even dangerous operations. The throat is cleansed with a long brush called *brahma dalan;* a thread is drawn through the mouth and each nostril in turn so as to cleanse the nasal fossæ; and there are some who actually swallow a long strip of cloth, and draw it out again after it has reached the stomach, which is thus cleansed.

Meditation, as practised by Hindu mystics, is really a means of emptying the mind by inducing a semi-hypnotic condition. Yoga, or union, is achieved by the complete suppression of the intellectual functions while in a waking condition, the vacuity which supervenes being represented

as a blissful state of temporary absorption into the all-encompassing and all-pervading Spirit. The yogi who aims at producing such states must first follow the way of purgation. Then, allowing himself full freedom in respect of food and drink, though usually living abstemiously, he must train himself for absorption into the Universal by the practice of certain helpful postures, by the regulation of his breathing in a manner requiring prolonged exercise, by intently gazing at a fixed point, preferably the navel or the tip of the nose, and by repeatedly muttering certain mystic syllables, especially the sacred word *om*.

The numerous beneficial postures (*asana*) which are enjoined—thirty-two are enumerated under fantastic names in the later handbooks of the Hatha-Yoga—are by no means easily learned. Some of them are nothing less than difficult contortions, requiring long practice and involving serious discomfort. When the yogi is able to remain motionless and silent in some of these approved positions, he must proceed to order his breathing in accordance with directions which are based upon a mythical anatomy but indicate, at the same time, a sound practical acquaintance with the intimate connection that exists between emotional states and the rate of respiration, and with the possibility of assisting to determine emotion by giving attention to the breathing. The fixed gaze and the monotonous repetition of significant words serve as an additional means of artificially promoting the desired condition of complete passivity. Thus communion with the Absolute is enjoyed at will, magical powers are imparted as a guarantee of its achievement, and final absorption after death is assured. So great is the sanctity of certain places such as the Trilochan temple and ghat dedicated to the three-eyed Siva at Benares, that *moksa* is assured to the devotee who meditates in this place uninterruptedly for but twenty-four hours in the month of Baisakh (April-May).

The Buddhist system of thought differs in important particulars from the Hindu system from which it took its rise. No place is found in it for spirit, the existence of God being ignored,[1] and the existence of the human soul being denied. Instead of the All-Spirit from which

[1] *Cf.* P. Dahlke, *Buddhist Essays*, p. 109. "The Buddha merely says: 'Despite all search I have not found any God, but in this search for God I have found the way to deliverance. Whether

the human spirit has become detached, there is a vast, ever-changing cosmos, subject to the law of cause and effect, but revealing neither beginning nor end, and disclosing no intelligible purpose. The Hindu doctrine of "wandering" is maintained, however, by substituting for the soul a persisting energy, which forms a starting basis for each new incarnation.[1] This hold on life which necessitates re-birth is held to be proportionate to the strength of the individuality of the person concerned. Wherever lust of life is yielded to, there separate existence, or individuality, is intensified; wherever it is contested, its power dwindles. By the one means life is made increasingly tenacious and will inevitably continue to produce an unlimited series of individual existences: by the other means life is returned to the great sum total of things, and the individual who thus returns it becomes at one with all that is.[2] For this union he need not wait until his death. Already in this life he may achieve arhatship and enjoy nirvana, which is the tranquillity of the life of realised union. The further enjoyment of nirvana beyond the time of the dissolution of the body is nowhere explained; but it is clear that logically death can mean only extinction. For there is no human personality left to enjoy the union which it has achieved by spiritual suicide, nor is personality ascribed to that with which union has been found, so that it is not possible to continue to enjoy even vicariously by means of a chosen proxy.[3]

there really is a God or no—of that I cannot say anything; of that I do not need to say anything; but, comprehending the true nature of life, I have discovered that salvation is possible without God, altogether apart from God.'"

[1] *Cf.* L. de la Vallée Poussin, *The Way to Nirvana*, p. 35. "There is not a Self, a permanent substantial unity, but there is a person, to be described as 'a living continuous fluid complex,' which does not remain quite the same for two consecutive moments, but which continues for an endless number of existences, bridging an endless number of deaths, without becoming completely different from itself." And on p. 48, "Although there is no migration, no future life of a soul, there is rebirth, owing to the efficient force of the acts which the dead man has accomplished and which inevitably bear fruit."

[2] This seems to justify the inclusion of Buddhist asceticism in this section, though from another point of view it might be contended that fellowship is the last thing the Buddhist desires.

[3] *Cf.* L. de la Vallée Poussin, *The Way to Nirvana*, p. 133. "According to the doctrinal tenets of Buddhism, accurately and

Thus, while Hinduism recognises no need for a redemption of the body, Buddhism, finding neither body nor soul to save, is compelled, vaguely and somewhat in spite of itself, to substitute for a permanent state of unconscious union with the Absolute Spirit, absorption into the ceaseless flux of the impersonal world-order. Again, while Hinduism proposes the accomplishment of the freedom of the imprisoned soul by the performance of acts of austerity as well as by the way of meditation, Buddhism, discovering the root of all suffering to consist in individual lust of life, proposes the attainment of nirvana by the reduction and final suppression of that lust. Not the positive infliction of pain, but the practice of unqualified renunciation is the only path leading to the desired goal.

Purgation is, therefore, specially important. After the example of Gautama himself, the bhikkhu must make complete surrender of family connections and any wealth or power that may be his, and withdraw to a life of seclusion and poverty, either as a hermit dwelling in cave or forest, or more commonly as a member of a monastic community. Only so can he hope to gain a true spirit of detachment and that peace and quiet which are essential conditions of the meditation he is required to practise. Celibacy is enjoined upon him; he may not use intoxicating drinks; no solid food is permitted to him between sunrise and noon; and on appointed days of fasting he is required to purge himself of offence by means of the *pratimoksa*, or confession of sin, which must be formally recited in the presence of the full chapter of monks.

profusely explained in every part of the Scriptures, Nirvana is annihilation: selflessness is, from our point of view, incompatible with any kind of survival of the Saint. But do the Buddhists draw from their tenets the logical conclusion concerning Nirvana? They do; or some of them do: there are categorical statements to prove that the compilers of some parts of the Scriptures identified Nirvana with annihilation." And in qualification, on the previous page, "It is not absolute nihilism, nihilism boldly looked at in the face. It is a negative attitude, which does not appeal to the most innate needs of our mind; but it is also to some extent an expectant attitude, which leaves some food to the needs of the human heart. The monk strives for unqualified deliverance; he does not inquire whether deliverance is destruction or a mysterious kind of existence; but he knows that Sakyamuni is omniscient and compassionate, and such a 'caravan-leader' is the great man upon whom it is safe to rely."

Buddhism knows no doctrine of salvation by works. Its founder had practised austerities before he became enlightened: but he taught that of themselves they were unavailing and dangerous,[1] and his followers have for the most part refused to depart from his teaching by any resumption of the Hindu *karma-marga*. Meditation is the true way. The Buddhist mystic intent on the quest of nirvana must pursue the scheme of the Eightfold Path. Having accomplished the initial stages of right belief, right resolution, right speech, right conduct, right means of subsistence, and right effort, which are clearly proposed as a complete preliminary moral discipline, he proceeds to the intellectual discipline of right reflection, by which he frees himself from lust and grief, and so arrives at the final stage of right absorption, or concentration, which is a mystical discipline devised in order to deliver him completely from the limitations of his own individuality and to transport him into the full joy of union with the universe. His methods in this concluding discipline are practically the same as those of the Hindu yogi, except that he is excused the necessity of practising complicated postures. He gives much attention to the art of managing the breath, and he learns to hypnotise himself by fixing his gaze on a certain point or by staring at a reflecting surface.

The successive stages of Buddhist mystical experience have, however, been mapped out in great detail, so that, by suggestion, they tend to repeat themselves and to give a more clearly defined content to the meditation of the Buddhist than is the case with the Hindu. Beginning with a deliberate concentration of attention on some one idea, the mystic dwells upon it until his purely intellectual interest passes away, and he enters on a state of restful, emotional regard, which is destined to disappear, in turn, before a vague consciousness of infinity opening out before him. Then he becomes aware that that is really nothing: he advances to a state of negative awareness which seems to be best explained as conveying the sense that the preceding perception of infinity was illusory in that it appeared to present a persisting reality, whereas its true significance was merely

[1] See the Kassapa-Sihanada Sutta, in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part I, trans. by T. W. Rhys Davids, pp. 223–240; and the Udumbarika Sihanada-Suttanta, in Part III, pp. 33–52.

that it led the self away from the consideration of a limited subject which, by reason of its limited nature, suggested a still stronger reality. Finally he arrives at a condition of blank indifference to all things, being neither conscious nor unconscious, but suspended, temporarily absorbed, resting in nirvana. The expert ascetic claims to be able to enter this state and to emerge from it at will.

Muslim mystical asceticism, known as Sufism, represents a reaction against the orthodox belief in a merely transcendent God and against the formalism and legalism of orthodox practice. It took its rise in Persia; and, while it is indebted to various streams of oriental thought, it owes most to India and to the Indian theory of the relation between the World-Soul and the spirit of man.[1] It does not, however, accept the Hindu position in respect of the evil of this present life, nor is it committed to the theory of reincarnation. Its goal is not deliverance from a weary round but present experience of the joy of oneness with God as a foretaste of ultimate and enduring absorption into the essence of the Deity, that union which it knows negatively as *fana* (passing away) and positively as *baqa* (abiding in God).

This Sufi philosophy lies behind the practice of the numerous darwish orders which have established themselves in steady succession from the 6th century of Islam onwards, providing Muslims with a welcome form of religious emotion in the exercises known as *dhikr* (recollection).[2] Membership in these orders is compatible with the pursuit of ordinary avocations, and is then marked only by certain peculiarities in dress, especially the headgear. The Baqtashi darwishes

[1] *Cf.* Ikbal Ali Shah in *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1922, p. 533. "The union of the creature with God is not an apotheosis of man, but a return of a portion of the Divine Spirit to its original fount and nucleus. The result of the union of man and God is annihilation of the merely human part of man and the withdrawal of his spiritual part to that place whence it emanated." So Mansur Hallaj (d. 922 A.D.) was put to death for saying "I am the Truth": but, on the other hand, Suhrawardi (d. 1191 A.D.) spoke of union as distinct from absorption, and is described by R. A. Nicholson as only "in a sense a pantheist."

[2] *Cf.* R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. vi. "Mysticism is such a vital element in Islam that without some understanding of its ideas and of the forms which they assume we should seek in vain to penetrate below the surface of Mohammedan religious life." And on p. 65, "Sufism is at once the religious philosophy and the popular religion of Islam."

still bore their ears on the threshold of their founder's tomb as a sign that they undertake the obligation of celibacy: but membership in Muhammadan religious orders is seldom conditioned by this requirement either. Novices are, however, directed by their shaikhs, or spiritual directors, to use solitude, silence, fasting, and sleeplessness as their four best weapons against the assaults of Satan.[1] al-Ghazzali tells how he spent two years in retreat in Syria immediately after he had accepted the principles of Sufism and renounced his property, his single object being the purification of his soul in preparation for meditation upon God: [2] and Suhrawardi recommends to Muslim ascetics a forty days' retreat in each year, not for vision and ecstasies, but for moral purification, accomplished by quiet and prayer and fasting, care being taken that clean clothes are worn and a clean prayer-mat used. Thus the soul may be purified for vision and union.

Muslim ascetics have not much to show in the way of self-torture. There are darwishes who pierce their flesh with sharp instruments, but this is usually done in order to demonstrate that they have reached a certain stage of close association with the Deity and are immune from ordinary human infirmity. The Sufi gives himself rather to the practice of breath-control, the frequent repetition of the name of God, and meditation on the name until the word becomes filled with a satisfying emotional content which defies analysis. It is characteristic of Muhammadan practice that mystical union is commonly sought by companies of devotees. Every order has its own special form of devotional exercise, which is

[1] In the *Masnavi* (Bk. II., vol. i., tr. C. E. Wilson, p. 305), Jalalu'ddin Rumi says, "The carnal soul is a sophist, strike (*i.e.* discipline) it; for striking is good for it, not reasoning with it." As C. Field says, in *Mystics and Saints of Islam*, p. 156, "The great Sufi teachers have always enjoined self-mortification, quoting the saying 'Die before you die.' This dying is divided by them into three kinds: 'black death' (suffering oppression from others), 'red death' (mortifying the flesh), and 'white death' (suffering hunger)."

[2] "I then betook myself to Syria, where I remained for two years, which I devoted to retirement, meditation, and devout exercises. I only thought of self-improvement and discipline and of purification of the heart by prayer in going through the forms of devotion which the Sufis had taught me. I used to live a solitary life in the Mosque of Damascus, and was in the habit of spending my days on the minaret after closing the door behind me." (*The Confessions of Al Ghazzali*, tr. by C. Field, p. 46).

performed at a daily or weekly service known as the *hadrah ;* and it is through these congregational devotions that mystical desire finds its chief outlet. Regular breathing, rhythmical movement, the repetition of the *fatiha* and the *kalima*, musical accompaniment, and the inspiration of corporate action, combine to produce in the worshippers an extraordinarily vivid sense of mystic union. In reciting their confession of faith the Naqshbandiyyah are instructed to hold the breath in the stomach, to say the syllable *La* in the heart, making it proceed from the navel towards the right side, and protracting it until it reaches the right shoulder ; next the word *ilaha* should be pronounced on the same side ; then *illa'llahu* is uttered energetically towards the left shoulder, the head being turned in that direction. In Scutari the Rifa'iyyah first sit, then stand on the right and left feet alternately, and repeat the *fatiha* while bending sideways. The Jahriyyah darwishes in Tashkent accompany the repetition of the formula with a violent movement of the head down over the heart towards the left shoulder, then down to the heart. The Maulawiyyah in Pera move round in circles to the accompaniment of music, repeating the *fatiha* as they go. In Egypt great use is made of drums of varied pitch, which are beaten at first slowly and softly, then at a gradually accelerated pace and more loudly, while the darwishes sway to and fro, keeping time with the drums and imitating the movements of a shaikh, who sits on his heels in front of the horseshoe formation in which they group themselves. In this way many Cairo shopkeepers of the middle class are accustomed to create for themselves an intense emotional experience which they are taught to interpret as a brief absorption into the being of God.

Muslims who seek to advance beyond the experience to be derived from the practice of the *dhikr* are required to follow the *tariqa* (path) prescribed by their director.[1] This consists mainly of exercises in meditation (*muraqabah*), by the persistent performance of which they may attain to the stage of *fana fi'llah*, or " disappearance in God," the mystic being then known as *ittihad* (united). Further striving leads to the stage of *fana ul-fana*, or " disappearance of fana," and finally to *baqa*, the ultimate goal, in which the world and the self are truly seen as but manifestations of the One.

[1] Known as *pir*, *murshid*, and *ustadh*, as well as *shaikh*.

4

While oriental mysticism is thus represented by its exponents as absorption into the All, Christian mysticism tells of the joy of ecstatic union between man's created and immortal spirit and the Eternal Creative Spirit of God. Content neither to deduce the existence and the presence of God as an inference from observed facts, nor with the realisation and enjoyment of that Presence by sacramental and sympathetic association, the mystic seeks a still more intimate union with the divine which shall be entirely unmediated. His aim is to become directly aware of God to the complete exclusion of all else, to know only that he is resting in God; to feel sustained by, saturated with, and folded in God's infinite Love. He endeavours to surrender himself wholly to God, so that his own individuality may be taken into the very Being of God for a brief space of time, so that God may be perfectly realised by him as all in all; and yet so that his individuality is not dissolved, but purified, heightened, and ennobled by the transforming joy which is bestowed upon it.

The intimacy of this union is so perfect that it is occasionally described by the mystic in terms which suggest that after all he has accepted the pantheistic philosophy of the oriental: [1] but that is never really true. A careful examination of the teaching of the mystics shows that, while their experience altogether confirms the Christian belief in a real affinity between the human and the divine, admitting of the closest communion, it has not weakened their hold on the Christian doctrine of the permanent continuance of the merely human and the permanent distinction of the human from the divine. Their ultimate goal is the general Christian goal of union with God through Christ in the highest possible degree: and their mystical privilege is regarded by them as the experience of brief anticipatory "visions" of that final blessedness. "To enjoy God without intermediary: that is what the spirit longs for, naturally, and supernaturally, with a supreme desire," says Ruysbroeck. "But even if divine union be effected without medium, we must understand that God and the creature can never be confounded; union can never become confusion; the distinction remains

[1] Notably in the case of Eckhart (1260–1329).

for ever inviolable." [1] Suso is no less clear. "In this merging of itself in God," he writes in his *Life*,[2] "the spirit passes away, and yet not wholly; for it receives indeed some attributes of Godhead, but it does not become God by nature. What befalls it is all of grace, for it is still a something which has been created out of nothing, and continues to be this everlastingly." And Julian of Norwich says, "I saw no difference between God and our Substance: but as it were all God; and yet mine understanding took that our Substance is in God: that is to say that God is God, and our Substance is a creature in God." [3]

This Christian mysticism, which is so entirely opposed to the mysticism of the East in its doctrinal setting and actual experience, also differs profoundly from that Greek philosophic mysticism which bequeathed to it in large measure the terms of its intellectual expression. The system of mystical philosophy known as Neo-Platonism, of which Plotinus is the greatest exponent, represents the ripest product of the development of that group of associated ideas which Pythagoras introduced into Greek philosophy—the "contemplative life," the "beatific vision," and the way of "purgation" and ἄσκησις—and Christian mystics have been greatly influenced by it: yet, in the case of the devotional mystics at least, the two types of mysticism are widely separated.

Three main points of distinction are enumerated by Dr. Inge in his Gifford Lectures.[4] Neo-Platonism knows nothing of revelations, divine favours, and working of miracles: it is entirely lacking in the experience of dereliction, "the dark night of the soul": and it tells only rarely of ecstasy. But the fundamental difference is that which is indicated a little later,[5] when he says, "We must admit that the whole character of the mysticism of Plotinus is affected by the fact that the ideal object of the quest is a state and not a person. At no point in the ascent is God conceived as a Person over against our own personality. The God whom Plotinus mainly worships—the Spirit—is transcendent as well as immanent in the world of Soul, but purely immanent in his own world, Yonder. In that world He

[1] See *Reflections from the Mirror of a Mystic*, p. 24.
[2] P. 245.
[3] *Revelations of Divine Love*, ch. 54, p. 130 f.
[4] *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, ii. 148–158. [5] Ib. 160 f.

is no longer an object but an atmosphere. The ineffable Godhead above God is, of course, supra-personal. There is, therefore, in the Plotinian mysticism, none of that deep personal loyalty, none of that intimate dialogue between soul and soul, none of that passion of love—resembling often too closely in its expression the earthly love of the sexes—which are so prominent in later mystical literature." Recognising that "those whose temperament leads them by this path are likely to find the mountain-track trodden by Plotinus cold, bleak, and bare," the writer, however, proceeds to suggest that "the difference between Neoplatonic and Christian devotion may easily be exaggerated. The Christian cannot feel for the exalted Christ the same emotion which he would have felt for the Galilean Prophet; his love is worship for a divine Being, the source of all that is lovable, and desire for spiritual communion with the living Power who has 'brought life and immortality to light.' The spiritual love of Plotinus is not very different."

It is peculiarly difficult for the non-mystic to appreciate and compare the different qualities of mystical experience; but, if we are to judge by the records the mystics themselves have left, this suggestion will find very small support. The Galilean Prophet and the exalted Christ are linked together by the figure of the Crucified, who both suffers and reigns upon the Tree: and it is upon this figure that the attention of the Christian mystic is most commonly concentrated.[1] He is first and foremost a lover of Christ crucified, and his type of mystical experience, and the asceticism which prepares for it and accompanies it, are both eloquent of this. For love of Christ he seeks to be united with Him, especially through suffering, in what we have already considered as

[1] *Cf.* E. Herman, *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 299. "The God of the Christian mystic, at any rate, is and has always been a *Person* whom he delights to describe positively and in terms of his own highest and best, and whom, more often than not, he completely identifies with the Saviour Christ to whom his most passionate and personal love is given. Nor is it possible to maintain that this warm, personal relation is the mystic's inheritance of the common Christian faith, while the abstract negative conception is the specifically mystical element. It needs only a very average acquaintance with mystical literature to produce the contrary conviction—that what makes the true mystic is his personal relation to the Lover and Redeemer of his soul; that it is precisely in the convictions which he shares with the Church Catholic that his specific genius finds its most characteristic expression."

sympathetic association, and also in the special experiences of ecstasy and rapture. Hence it comes about that some, like St. Francis of Assisi and the Lady Julian of Norwich, have usually become entranced while gazing on the crucifix; and others, like St. Catherine of Siena and St. Catherine of Genoa, have fallen into ecstasy immediately after receiving the Sacrament of the Altar. The God to whom they are united is the Christ they adore, or the Blessed Trinity revealed by Him; and their mysticism is far removed from Neo-Platonism by its religious quality and by its basis of historical fact, that is by its stronger hold on Truth.

Ecstasy and rapture, the two forms of special mystical experience in which these lovers of Christ have been joined to Him, are essentially identical in content; but, whereas the former comes as the climax of an ordered series of approaches to the divine in the course of deliberate meditation, rapture is the sudden invasion of the mystic's normal consciousness by the unheralded and unlooked for Divine Presence. In both cases the duration of the experience is generally brief, though by no means invariably so: but, while it lasts, the mystic remains in an abnormal state of consciousness, cold and rigid, scarcely breathing, and altogether incapable of reacting to any external stimulus.

These experiences are not to be had at the price of asceticism. The mystic knows that he can never claim as a right the experience he seeks, or, in spite of every endeavour, win it surely for himself.[1] If it comes, it is God's gift. All he can do is to prepare himself diligently for the visitation and wait on God's pleasure. But prepare himself he must, both negatively and positively, by the way of utter self-surrender to the divine purpose. "En tout mystique il y a un ascète, et l'ascétisme est, si l'on peut dire, à la source même du mysticisme." [2]

[1] *Cf.* St. Teresa's reference to mystic union, in *The Way of Perfection*, Ch. 33, as a state "which we cannot bring about of ourselves, despite all our efforts."

[2] Brenier de Montmorand, *Ascétisme et Mysticisme: étude psychologique*, *Revue Philosophique*, Mars, 1904.

Cf. O. Quick, *The Value of Myst. in Relig. Faith and Practice*, *Jour. of Theol. Studies*, January, 1912. "It would appear that it is only at the level of renunciation, when the realisation of the Cross absorbs the consciousness almost to the exclusion of other aspects of Christian truth, that man attains a special and mystic sense of contact with the Divine."

Detachment and quiet are the first essentials; yet not necessarily the seclusion of the anchorite nor membership in a contemplative Order.[1] The soul must wean itself from the love of the world, and it must practise an expectant stillness: and both of these things may be done within the life of the world, while they are not guaranteed by withdrawal from that life. Ruysbroeck urges that "What is needed is solitude of heart and spirit. Without this were you alone in the world you would not be a solitary; with it you would be a solitary amid the densest crowd."[2] Yet quiet must be compassed according to the needs of the soul. In answer to the question, In what state men may most love God? Richard Rolle says, "I answer in such state as it be that men are in most rest of body and soul, and least occupied with any needs or business of this world. For the thought of the love of Jesus Christ, and of the joy that lasts aye, seeks outward rest, so that it be not hindered by comers and goers, and occupation of worldly things; and it seeks within great silence from the annoyances of desires, and of vanities, and of earthly thoughts. And especially, all who love contemplative life they seek rest in body and soul. For a great Doctor says: 'They are God's throne who dwell still in one place, and are not running about, but in sweetness of Christ's love are fixed.' And I have loved for to sit: for no penance, nor fantasy, nor that I wished men to talk of me, nor for no such thing: but only because I knew that I loved God more, and longer lasted within the comfort of love: than going, or standing, or kneeling. For sitting am I in most rest, and my heart most upward. But therefore, peradventure, it is not best that another should sit, as I did and will do to my death, save he were disposed in his soul, as I was."[3]

Next, the positive part of the mystic's preparation includes the disciplinary exercise and penitential practice to be described in the next two chapters, asceticism which he shares with his non-mystical fellows; the sympathetic suffering described above, in which lies his peculiar temptation to harmful excess;[4] and the asceticism of exacting

[1] *Cf.* G. E. Hodgson, *English Mystics*, p. 79.
[2] *Reflections from the Mirror of a Mystic*, p. 43 f.
[3] *The Form of Perfect Living*, p. 70 f.
[4] A good example of sane comment on the excesses of mystical ascetics is to be found in O. Quick's essay on *Mysticism*, p. 178 f. He says, "It is, of course, true that many mystics have by the practice

spiritual exercise. When he has attained a true detachment from the world and has thoroughly disciplined his bodily desires, the mystic must systematically strengthen and purify his soul in preparation for the high privilege he seeks. It is as though the soul's powers lie dormant, requiring to be developed for the apprehension of the Source of its life. By the persistent practice of prayer, in itself an arduous task, it must be fitted to enter on the more advanced work of meditation, by which it may pass from recollection to quiet, from quiet to contemplation, and in the last phase of contemplation be transported into ecstasy.[1] It is only in the first of these stages that the will-power needs to be exercised and the soul may truly be said to be subject to discipline. Here it is required to concentrate on some thought of God or Christ, some incident or character or word from Holy Scripture, so as to cause this one thing to grow upon the mystic, while he becomes increasingly a passive beholder, "recollected" or gathered together into a unified personality.

But if the whole path of mystical ascent up to this point is rough with asceticism, it is in the mystical experience itself and its immediate sequel that the height of ascetic endurance is reached. The mystic is privileged to behold, but he is called upon to suffer both in beholding and in returning from the state of exaltation. He rejoices in his experience, yet "it would be a mistake to suppose that the ecstasy is an experience of mere sweetness. For many

of self-mortification crippled themselves mentally and physically in a way which the modern conscience would condemn. It may freely be admitted that here lies the besetting sin of what may be called orthodox mysticism; and certainly it is idle to follow pessimising critics, with whose ill-concealed complacency we are nowadays so familiar, in ascribing our dislike for such performances to the luxury of a materialistic age. At least, however, the mystic has always borne witness to the principle of utter self-sacrifice which is the foundation of all practical ethics. In times of intellectual stagnation and material self-indulgence he has furnished the startling example which alone could pierce dull ears and blinded eyes: and if in so doing he has sometimes forgotten that the end of this renunciation should be to lead men to God and establish peace on earth, at least as much as to save his own soul 'so as by fire,' yet at any rate overwhelming evidence can be brought to prove that this form of vicious detachment is no integral part of the mystic character."

[1] For details of these stages see E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, pp. 357–452.

mystics it is what Browning describes as the ideal of joy—'three parts pain.'"[1] The descent from the mount, again, involves the discipline of "facing the Multiple and Contingent,"[2] and the resumption of the life of effort. Filled with a deep conviction of the truth of their visionary experiences, often yearning after the consummation of those ecstasies in the permanent union which death alone makes possible, the mystics have yet continued to yield themselves to earthly labours of a direct and simple usefulness and to the further purification of their better understood spiritual nature with humility, courage, and determination.[3]

The ascetic way of fellowship trodden by the Christian mystic is thus to be regarded as a privileged road of peculiar toilsomeness involving a high degree of pain, transformed though it be; and if the majority of Christians think rather of the privilege than of the accompanying suffering as they contemplate the mystic experience, it is because of the comparative rarity of the experience, because of its value as a

[1] J B. Pratt, *The Relig. Consciousness*, p. 431. According to B. Zimmermann this explains "why the soul should pass through the trials of the Dark Night. Its ultimate destiny is union with God. Now the soul is finite, and God is infinite. The disproportion between the two is so enormous (being, in fact, infinite in itself) that the mere comparison must have a crushing effect upon the finite being. Every soul will have to pass through this experience, the minority already in this life in the Dark Night of contemplation, the vast majority on leaving this life, when they will suddenly find themselves encompassed by the infinite Majesty and Power of the Godhead. When the finite comes into contact with the infinite it realises its utter nothingness; it is humbled to the ground. The contrast causes it the most intense pain. This thorough humiliation makes it possible for the infinitesimal to be united to the infinite, for, as Christ says, 'He who humbleth himself shall be exalted'" (*The Dark Night of the Soul*, p. xv. f). *Cf.* F. von Hügel, *The Myst. Elem. of Rel.*, ii. 343 ff.

[2] F. von Hügel, *The Myst. Elem. of Relig.*, ii. 347.

[3] *Cf.* E. Herman, *The Meaning and Value of Myst.*, p. 352. "They did not profane these moments of vision by trying to give them a permanence in time which did not belong to them, and by some act of mental juggling to persuade themselves that they had finally passed beyond the phenomenal to the ultimately real. Their way was rather to see the sins and imperfections of their pilgrimage loom black against the flashlight picture of attained bliss, and to let the fugitive glory of their vision drive them with a deeper repentance and a more whole-hearted surrender to that Cross which alone makes the saint."

pledge to Christians generally of the joys of the life of union in the world to come, and, above all, because for the mystic himself the pain of it is dwarfed in the supreme uplifting which he enjoys. The mystic way, however, is one to which few are called—"the privilege of the few to whom God unites Himself ineffably by flooding them with light and love"; [1] and for the vast body of those who are in Christ the way of fellowship in this life is the way of sympathetic association by sacramental inclusion in the disciplined, moral, corporate life of the Christian community.

[1] P. Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality*, p. v.

CHAPTER V

THE DISCIPLINARY IDEAL—RIGHTEOUSNESS

I

IN primitive society that which is customary is accounted right. Righteousness is conformity with the unwritten code that is expressed in the normal life of the community. Children are formally instructed in this code when they reach the age of puberty: young people continue to learn through the disciplinary control which the group exercises over them: and, without the power of reflecting upon the distinction between right and wrong, they act in accordance with the laws of their people, believing that these possess the authority not only of the distant past but of the present encompassing spirit-world. Sometimes the name of a particular deity is found attached to the code: sometimes it bears the name of a famous ancestor but little lower than the gods in rank: more commonly it is nameless but believed to be intimately associated with gods and spirits generally. Its authority is enforced by action both human and divine. That is to say, breaches of custom may involve punishment by senior members of the tribe, or direct supernatural revenge, or both these results: and the unknown and mysterious consequences dependent upon spiritual action are more to be feared than those which are left to be inflicted by man. Custom must be observed, therefore, with attentive care; and this frequently means the practice of renunciation, the endurance of suffering, or the performance of toil, in a rudimentary disciplinary asceticism.

The offering of sacrifice involves primitive peoples in a good deal of renunciation; but much of it is not strictly ascetic, since it is undertaken rather as a means of purchasing material benefits and removing present or apprehended evils than with a view to the adjustment of moral and spiritual relationships. All the ills of life are ascribed either to the malevolence of jealous and dangerous powers who have men at their mercy and oppress them without provocation,

or to their wrathful visitation of those who have neglected to make satisfactory provision for them. Drought and flood, scanty harvests, disease and death, ill success in hunting or fighting or in any other undertaking, all alike are attributed to the hostility of spirits: and, if these misfortunes are to be avoided, or if, being suffered, they are to be removed, the spirits who send them must be propitiated. This means that sacrifice must be offered as an investment intended to secure a profitable return. But out of this there gradually develops the sacrifice of propitiation and deprecation, with a sense of sin, which falls to be treated in the next chapter; and also the regular tendance of gods and spirits, with a sense of attachment and obligation, and a reverential awe and delight in worship. A bond is felt to exist between them and the people over whose fortunes they preside: they are looked to as protectors and benefactors: and they are accorded a regular ministration of food, prayer, and worship.

The disposal of these offerings—for we are concerned only with those gifts which are "sent away," as the Ainus have it in their word *iyomande*—is commonly made either by abandonment or by burning. When food is placed out in the open and abandoned, it is consumed by animals; or, being put out of their reach, it slowly decays. Nevertheless, those who offer it in this manner are satisfied, chiefly no doubt by the emotional content of the act of renunciation, but also, when they reflect at all about the matter, by the explanation that the essence or spirit of the food is absorbed by the being to whom it is offered, and that the fate of what remains is negligible.[1] Thus Tahitian altars of enormous

[1] *Cf.* E. H. Gomes, *Seventeen Years among the Sea-Dyaks of Borneo*, p. 202 f. "I remember when I was staying at Temudok the Dyaks put up a little shed, with offerings of food, at the landing-place on the bank of the river. There was an epidemic of cholera at the time, and the spirits of disease were supposed to eat these offerings and go away contented. Among the offerings was a little live chicken, that was tied to the *para piring*, but which managed to get loose. Some of the schoolboys staying with me asked if they might catch the chicken, which was running about in the grass, and rear it. I did not like to allow them to do this, because I thought the Dyaks would resent the boys interfering with their sacrifice. But my Dyak catechist told me that the Dyaks had done their duty in making the offerings, and what happened afterwards to the things offered did not matter. So the boys caught the chicken and reared it. I spoke to the Dyaks about it afterwards, and they did not seem to mind their 'altar of sacrifice' being robbed of its offering."

size were generally to be found covered with piles of food, plantains, coconuts, fish, turtles, hogs, and other bodies, all of which were left there to rot. In Melanesia food is just thrown away at random. The Fijians were accustomed to carry hundreds of hogs and turtles each year to the cave where Ndengei dwelt, and to leave them there.

Fire, which has the effect of visibly transforming the material offering into an ascending column of smoke, suggests thereby that the surrendered food has been effectively etherealised and so rendered fit for the use of spirits: and, further, it seems to the worshipper to supply evidence of acceptance by the speedy and almost complete appropriation of that which is presented. The very general use of fire is also to be accounted for, no doubt, by the existence of an idea that fire is itself pure and destructive of all impurity: it is thus regarded as an aid to the worthy offering of sacrifice.

By these two means renunciation is accomplished, not as a fitful and haphazard practice, but generally according to definite plan, regularly and frequently. The course of the year is marked by a series of appointed times when the sacrificial offering of food must be made: and, in addition, the life of each individual brings with it certain prescribed occasions of open-handed approach to the gods.

Among some peoples of the lower culture a peculiar variety of this tendance of the gods in the matter of food is found in a general abstention from certain foods at a time when the spirits are supposed to require them. Thus the Andaman Islanders refrain themselves at particular seasons in favour of the god Puluga. Among several West African tribes it is ordained by the parents and the magic doctor that a child shall refrain absolutely from the use of certain foods, which are literally accounted a sacrifice made to the spirit which governs the child's life.

The custom of making sacrificial offerings to the dead at the time of burial seems to have been intended generally as a means of providing them with necessary subsistence in the other world: and with this object supplies of food were usually offered at intervals subsequently, in order to maintain them in comfort. An annual offering is generally held to suffice, this being made in some places on one fixed day in each year for all the dead, in other places on the anniversaries of deaths as they recur. Sometimes, however, there is a daily offering of food for a considerable period immediately

after the burial of the dead. Thus, for example, in Polynesia the corpse was provided with food each day for six weeks or two months, and even after this the food was renewed with some frequency.

In addition to offerings of food and drink, other material possessions of every conceivable kind are presented to the dead; for it is considered that they have need of,[1] or that they have rights in respect of, all those things with which men provide themselves, for necessary use, for convenience, and for adornment. Renouncing their rights of succession, relatives and friends surrender to the dead whatever belonged to them while they lived, and very frequently make addition to these things with great generosity. To this ancient and almost universal practice we are indebted for the preservation of the larger part of the prehistoric relics that have been unearthed; and it is noteworthy that many of them have never been used.

The opinion has been hazarded that the use of mourning apparel is derived from the custom of sacrificing to the dead the very clothes worn by the bereaved. However this may be, it is certainly a common practice to offer clothing. The Amorites at Gezer and the Gilyaks of Saghalien attended with much care to the provision of sufficient and worthy clothing for the dead. In Japan the Shintoists provided dress material for the spirits: the Chinook Indians gave pieces of cotton, together with red cloth and furs: and the Samoyeds provided even needles and thread, or sinews, for sewing. To the ordinary decencies of clothing it was the custom of some peoples to add articles of personal adornment, such as shells and beads, embroidered work, rings, necklaces, bracelets, and other pieces of jewellery. Playthings and trinkets are found in the graves of children; domestic implements were often buried with women; and men's graves have revealed an abundance of tools and weapons

[1] There is evidence that provision was made sometimes for the guidance of the dead to the other world; and, again, that the offerings were sometimes intended to supply means whereby the dead might prove their earthly status and so secure treatment in accordance with their rank. It was understood in the Society Islands, for instance, that the common people who died went down to the Po, that is to Hades, while members of the Areoi Society, chiefs, and those whose families could afford to make sufficient provision, went to Rohutu, or Paradise. There was thus an inducement to those who loved their dead to practise a costly renunciation on their behalf.

of the most various kinds—spears and spear-heads, bows, arrows, arrow-points, shields, knives, swords, and guns.

These gifts are commonly buried with the dead; when the body is cremated they are burned with it. Sometimes, however, they are broken over the grave. By chipping or destroying them it is considered that their spirit is transferred to the other world.[1] The Ainus were accustomed to "kill" the possessions of a dead man thus; in Mexico it was usual to break articles of pottery on the grave; in South Africa the Yaos grind to powder ivory and beads, and put the dust into the grave.

As is the case in respect of offerings of food and drink, men are sometimes provoked to question the necessity for this renunciation, and they proceed to satisfy their sacrificial instinct by the presentation of representative offerings or even of worthless counterfeits.[2] Graves are found to contain simulacra of weapons, furniture, and animals: and the inference is that these have taken the place of the actual gifts which it had been customary to offer. In China men invented the simple device of making paper gifts to be burnt instead of real offerings. By all such avoidance of obligation clear proof is given of the serious nature of the burden of self-deprivation which is borne by those who offer genuine sacrifices.

Death imposes upon the mourners not only the necessity of renunciation through sacrifice, however, but also the obligation of a considerable degree of suffering in a public demonstration of mourning which is required by the group, and is not to be regarded as the outcome of personal sorrow and affection.[3] Among the Polynesians the death of a chief or king was followed by a most amazing exhibition of self-wounding. Groups of men would beat themselves almost senseless with clubs, and would cut and tear their bodies,

[1] In some cases this destruction seems to have been necessitated by theft from graves.

[2] The Todas place objects of value on the bier and then remove them before swinging the corpse three times over a fire. As to this W. H. R. Rivers says, "It would seem as if this ceremony of swinging the body over the fire was directly connected with the removal of the objects of value. The swinging over the fire would be symbolic of its destruction by fire, and this symbolic burning has the great advantage that the objects of value are not consumed and are available for use another time." (*The Todas*, p. 363.)

[3] See E. Durkheim, *The Elem. Forms of the Relig. Life*, p. 397.

with shells, knives, and spears. They would root out their hair in handfuls, and burn themselves with lighted sticks or pieces of burning cloth. Spencer and Gillen give an account of a public mourning which they witnessed in Central Australia. "The next day was a busy one in camp, because, according to etiquette, there were certain mourning ceremonies which had to be performed, the omission of which would indicate a want of respect for and be very displeasing to the spirit of the dead man. Different men belonging to the Thungalla, Tjupila, Thakomara, and Thapungarti classes were lying *hors de combat* with gashed thighs. They had done their duty, and henceforth, in token of this, would be marked with deep scars. On one such man we counted the traces of no less than twenty-three wounds which had been inflicted at different times. Of course everything is hedged around with very definite rules, and when a man of any particular class dies it is always men who stood in a special relationship to him who have to cut themselves." [1] Meanwhile "the women set to work wailing and cutting their scalps" with yam-sticks.

Frequently the gashing of the body is undertaken with the object of supplying the dead with strength by means of the blood that is shed. In Tahiti the custom obtained of catching the blood in cloths and then throwing them under the bier on which the corpse rested. In New South Wales men were accustomed to stand over the grave and allow the blood to trickle into it from wounds which they had cut with their boomerangs. Young men in Indo-China have wounded themselves even mortally in their willing surrender of blood for the satisfaction of the needs of the dead.

In many places the mutilation of a finger is used to express sorrowful self-surrender. Sometimes no doubt this was only a substitute for the sacrifice of the life itself: for it has been widely accepted that it is the duty of those who were closely attached to a man in this life to continue to provide for him in the other world by accompanying him thither. Servants and slaves have offered themselves, or have been offered, at the time of their master's burial. Among the Central African Bairo a woman who refused to destroy herself on her husband's grave was regarded as an outcast; Fijian widows were frequently sacrificed at their own request, whether

[1] *The Northern Tribes of Cent. Aust.*, p. 519 f.

through affection and duty, or because their reputation was at stake : and not long since a Mahafaly chief in Madagascar was accompanied to the other world by his favourite wife and four of his servants.[1]

Fasting and abstinence are commonly imposed upon relatives of the deceased, especially upon widows, and are sometimes maintained for very long periods. Among the Tikopians, for example, " the period of mourning is long. All the relatives drink only water and eat only mammy-apples (Papaia) for four or five months, and they often obstain from coconuts, taro, yams, and fish, or one or more of these, for as long as a year." [2] Among the Tshi-speaking peoples of West Africa the relatives of the dead fast " as long as their strength permits." Silence is also imposed in some cases, especially upon widows again, for varying terms, extending even to two years among certain Australian tribes.

Duty to the self, and through the self to the tribe, involves an asceticism of restraint in the matter of continence during hunting and fishing and in time of war, and in eating and drinking. Certain articles of food are permanently tabu to some groups, not because they are disagreeable or physically dangerous, but solely through religious awe and fear of spiritual consequences. Totemism may lie behind the prohibition, or a belief in sympathetic or contagious magic, or there may be an entire absence of rational basis : but, whatever the explanation, a breach of the tabu law is held to be an unrighteous act, and self-restraint is exercised in order to avoid the committal of such an act. The Omaha Indians refrain from eating the flesh of the male elk, because this animal is their totem ; the Namaquas of South Africa refuse to eat the hare, supposing that its flesh would impart faint-heartedness to them ; and the negroes of the Loango Coast abstain from goat-flesh and fowls for no known reason except that it is their custom. It is not to be supposed that these things are very irksome in themselves, but they are elements in a comprehensive scheme of prohibited action.

[1] This duty of devotional self-sacrifice is not always gladly accepted, but the strong sense of obligation which imposes it is well seen among the Bantu, where, on the death of a man of aristocratic rank, the escape of the widows is connived at, only, however, at the cost of considerable suffering and subsequent purification before rejoining their people. *See* G. McC. Theal, *The Yellow and Dark-skinned People of Africa South of the Zambesi*, p. 187 f.

[2] W. H. R. Rivers, *The Hist. of Melanesian Society*, i. 314.

Similarly restrictions are laid upon various groups within a tribe, and on individuals. Men of the Caroline Islands are forbidden to eat a common blackbird, which is a food much enjoyed by the women: and, while the women of certain Dyak tribes on the western branch of the river of Sarawak are allowed to partake of goats, fowls, and a certain kind of fern which forms an excellent vegetable, these are all forbidden to the men. In the Unyamwezi, south of the Victoria Nyanza, on the other hand, fowl is not permitted to women, but to men; among the Mandingoes of Teesee no woman is allowed to eat an egg: and women of the Ba-Yaka fear to eat either flesh or fish. During pregnancy the women of the Koita of New Guinea do not eat bandicoot, echidna, certain specified fish, or iguana, and their husbands observe the same restraint; among the Andaman Islanders pregnant women must forgo pork, turtle, and honey; and among the Caribbeans the father must fast for forty days after the birth of his child. Certain parts of meat, such as the liver, heart, and kidney, are forbidden to the children of the Wagogo of East Africa; and in the Andaman Islands, as among the Samoans and certain West Africans, a life-long prohibition against eating some one animal or fish is laid upon each person, in the belief that that particular food is liable to produce evil effects of a mysterious nature. Everywhere these restrictions are for the most part faithfully observed, although their observance as a whole frequently involves considerable personal hardship.

2

The customary morality of peoples of the lower culture is gradually developed with the advance of social organisation along the lines of two separate apprehensions which are present to it in its very early stages. Tabu carries with it a sense of law which must not be broken because to break it would be to violate the natural way or order of things; and also it is commonly invested with an atmosphere of personal authority, remotely supernatural and more nearly human in the persons of the senior male members of the tribe. By degrees it is found necessary to codify the customary practices of amalgamated tribes in a body of regulations, and it comes about that such a code is regarded mainly either as the understanding expression of the relations which man's life ought

to bear to the system of things in which he is living, or as the requirements of a personal deity whose will must be obeyed. Gods and spirits are by no means excluded from the former way of thinking: but where any such are believed to exist, they themselves, no less than men, are held to be subject to the same inexorable system. There is also the difference, as compared with the acceptance of a code of law having divine authority, that the greatest variation exists in respect of the content of the code which is accepted as a response to cosmic law. Legal morality is for ever amplifying its code: the morality which endeavours to meet a fixed order of things may vary from the customary and unthinking observance of a code as full as that of any merely legal system to the individual application of a few accepted principles. Thus in Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, all of which base their moral systems rather upon the recognition of cosmic order than upon divine decrees, there are various degrees of carefully defined obligation in many matters, the acceptance of which involves an asceticism of renunciation and of ceremonial observance; while in Cynicism, Stoicism, and a good deal of modern agnostic morality, the obligation is far less defined, and individualistic self-discipline is undertaken, entirely freed from ceremonial requirement.

In the Vedas the conception of law and order appears as *rta*, which "presents itself under the threefold aspect of cosmic order, correct and fitting cult of the gods, and moral conduct of man."[1] The whole course of nature is conceived to be governed by *rta*: when sacrifice is rightly offered, without resort to magic, the devout worshipper is regarded as conforming to *rta*: and *rta* is again the ruling principle in the life of the righteous man.

To the Vedic period there succeeded an age of priestly organisation and philosophic speculation. While the latter gave to Hinduism the fundamentals of its permanent scheme of thought, and inspired to mystical asceticism those who sought deliverance from the round of illusory existence, the former explained and justified the construction of Indian society according to the caste-system; and, recognising that order which had been known as *rta* under the name of *dharma*, it devised a full scheme of duties for the members of the

[1] M. Bloomfield, *Rel. of the Veda*, p. 126.

various groups into which society was thus divided, and codified it in a series of Dharma-sutras, or Law-books. The contents of these were subsequently reproduced in metre in the more popular Sastras. Thus, in the Manava Dharma-sastra, or Law-book of Manu, which is the most important of these, the *dharma*, or right way of life, is expounded for the numerous lower castes resulting from mixed or irregular marriages, with greater fulness for warriors, merchants, agriculturists, and servants, and in great detail for the Brahmans, from whose point of view the whole scheme is elaborated. The regulations are no longer a true index to the life of the Hindu, for many changes and additions have been made;[1] but the same minute government of social life by caste-laws regarding ceremonies, eating and drinking, marriage, and other matters, remains to-day, and is to be considered as in some sense the essence of Hinduism.

Hinduism is extraordinarily complex and indefinable, so that even those who have an intimate knowledge of it from within are hard put to it to say in what exactly it consists. But whatever the standard of culture of the individual Hindu, and whatever the vagaries of his religious worship, unless he is a professional ascetic the observance of caste-rules is strictly required of him under pain of expulsion from his caste by the *panchayat*, or caste tribunal: and this means ultimately that the one thing to which he is positively committed is conformity with *rta*, or *dharma*. He may worship the gods very much according to choice; but righteousness consists for him in obedience to caste regulations which are believed to be based upon the eternal order.[2]

Faithful observance of every ritual requirement to be found in some of the codes would impose upon the pious householder the necessity of devoting the greater part of his time to the performance of some religious ceremony. In practice a judicious selection is made by the group concerned,

[1] "The rules of food, connubium and intercourse between the various castes are very different from what we find at present" (W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the N.-W. Provs. and Oudh*, I. xxvi).

[2] *Cf.* W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, p. 194. "The life of a Hindu . . . is regulated by a code of ritual observances, which are the chief part of his religion. These observances are intended to counteract taboo, the effects of which appear through the whole course of his existence."

the individual Hindu rarely standing alone in such matters or daring to disregard the opinion of society. Apart from such ceremonial observances, righteousness is conceived as consisting mainly in the proper use of food and drink. Restrictions are imposed in respect of the varieties of food that may be used, the methods of their preparation, the persons by whom it is lawful for the preparation to be undertaken, and the persons in whose company it may be eaten. All animal food is abstained from as a general rule by members of the higher castes; food which has been touched by a member of a lower caste than that of the person for whom it is intended, or in some cases by a member of any other caste, or upon which only their shadow has fallen, is held to be polluted and must be thrown away; drinking vessels thus contaminated must be purified or destroyed. A special asceticism is expected of widows, who do honour to their deceased husbands and to the caste to which they belong by spending their lives in the practice of austerity and renunciation.[1]

Early Zoroastrianism, the western branch of the stock from which the Vedic religion took its beginning, held precisely the same view of cosmic order as is found in the Vedas, calling it *asa*, however, instead of *rta*: and this term is still "the highest word in the Zoroastrian terminology, and its derivative *ashavan* forms the epithet of the man who is most saintly and possesses the noblest character."[2] In its development of the conception of the nature of the deity Zoroastrianism differed widely from Brahmanism, it is true, achieving monotheism instead of pantheism, with the result that *asa* came to be thought of as the law of Ahura Mazda rather than as an independent world-order. Yet the general position of His worshippers is, not so much that they are obedient to His personal law as that they co-operate with Him in the endeavour to maintain the *asa* or law of righteousness which is inherent in the general scheme of things but is threatened by the powers of evil.

In the place of the Vedas Zoroastrianism had its Gathas; in the place of the later Sutras it developed its Vendidad, or Law-against-demons, in the interests of the maintenance and triumph of the *asa*. For the guidance of those who are

[1] "The castes whose widows live an ascetic life enjoy a higher status on that account." E. A. Gait in E.R.E. iii. 236.

[2] M. N. Dhalla, *Zoroastrian Theology*, p. 31.

engaged in the war of the good against the evil, clean against unclean, righteousness against unrighteousness, a multitude of regulations is here set forth, some of them insignificant, some of them merely foolish, but all of them together calculated to make life fussily and ascetically ceremonial. At a much later date, from the last quarter of the 15th century to the middle of the 18th, there was considerable intercourse between the Zoroastrians of India and Persia; and many questions put by the former concerning ritual observances, purificatory rites, rules of adoption and marriage, and various other matters, were answered in a series of compilations known as Rivayats. Here again the formal aspect of religion receives much emphasis, and the way of righteousness is represented chiefly as the avoidance of ceremonial impurity and the correct performance of numerous ritual duties.

The modern Parsi does not hold himself bound by these codes, and his asceticism is small;[1] but he generally refrains from meat on four days in each month, days which are accounted sacred to Bahman, the genius of cattle; and the members of a family in which a death has occurred abstain similarly for three consecutive days. For the most part, however, he believes in the possibility of self-development without ascetic self-control, and is not ashamed to declare that "Zoroastrianism stands for self-assertion. Despite their insignificant numbers, the inherent and dominant characteristics of the Parsis made them self-sufficient in the midst of the Hindus of Gujarat, whose religious ideals were self-surrender and self-renunciation."[2] As to which Dr. J. H. Moulton truly observes, "The deepest religious instinct has always told us that the way of renunciation is the way of highest good; and Zarathushtra himself chose that way when he became a missionary and suffered hardship with his gospel. To use God's gifts and not refuse them, to take the call to sacrifice when it comes and not go out of the way to

[1] Yet the ceremonial law still binds him strongly in some matters. His inability to deliver himself entirely is seen in the objections raised, not long since, to the closing of the wells in the courtyards of the houses of Bombay Parsis, though they were known to serve as breeding-places for the malaria-carrying mosquitoes which were seriously reducing their vitality. This might not be done because it is not lawful in their ritual worship to make use of filtered water conveyed from the city mains.

[2] M. N. Dhalla, op. cit., p. 343.

find it, is no doubt the higher and truer way. Yet for the hardness of men's hearts there has sometimes been given a divine leading on a very different road, since the acceptance and right use of the world is so much more dangerous for poor human nature than the course that brings self-sacrifice, even though the particular self-sacrifice be needless and almost wrong. It is this absence of a strong call to sacrifice which lies at the root, it would seem, of the failure of Parsi religion to-day." [1]

Buddhism adopted from Brahmanism the name and the idea of *dharma* or *dhamma*, which "implied, for the philosophical Buddhist, an impersonal, eternal order of things, according to which all things, animate and inanimate, gods included, moved and had their being." [2] The Buddhist code of conformity with the *dhamma* varies greatly, however, in the different lands in which the Buddha's system has established itself, and also in the practice of the various grades of those who follow it. Instead of a broad division into two classes, monks and laymen, the former observing a full and more exacting code, the latter a less detailed scheme framed to suit their life in the world, we find in Japan, for example, where the Dharmagupta system of discipline is widely practised, no fewer than seven classes, each with its recognised standard of observance.[3] The Ubasoku (laymen) and Ubai (laywomen), the two classes which stand lowest, are required to observe the five precepts, namely, not to kill, not to steal, not to be guilty of any form of lewdness, not to lie, not to use intoxicants; in addition to which sexual intercourse is prohibited on the weekly sabbath day, perfumes and oil are forbidden, together with luxurious couches, and dances and spectacular shows of any kind are tabued. The Shami and Shamini (male and female endeavourers), who come next in order, add to the above rules a vow of perpetual poverty. The Shiki Shamana, a yet higher grade, add the "six doctrines," by which they bind themselves not to kill even a mosquito, to be scrupulously honest in all money matters, to refrain from even touching a woman, to use no form of prevarication or deception, to forswear the

[1] J. H. Moulton, *The Treasure of the Magi*, p. 196. It is only fair to point out, however, that Dhalla says on p. 34, "There is nothing nobler for her (the spirit) than the virtue of self-sacrifice."

[2] C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 48.

[3] See A. Lloyd, *The Creed of Half Japan*, pp. 133–137.

use of any fermented liquor, and to take no meals out of hours. The Biku and the Bikuni, the monk and the nun of the highest grade, undertake the observance of the "complete rules," which number 250 for a man, and 348 for a woman, and include restrictions in respect of a multitude of offences as well as a series of rules for proper deportment.

In China philosophy and religion are closely wedded. To the native religions of Taoism and Confucianism, the foundations of which go back many hundreds of years before Christ, the Chinese people added the religion of the Buddha in the first century after Christ, receiving it from Central Asia and India with important modifications. And not only have these three religions existed side by side since that time, but large numbers of Chinese have been at once Taoists, Confucianists, and Buddhists. This is usually explained by the suggestion that these three so-called religions are individually restricted in their scope to such an extent that, when brought together, they are found to be not conflicting but complementary. Taoism ministers to superstition and supplies magic for the relief of man's necessities; Buddhism, in its Chinese form, supplies and satisfies devotion: while Confucianism adds to these a code of ethics. There is certainly much truth in this. But a further explanation of the possibility of thus professing the three religions at one time would seem to be that, different as they are in so many ways, they all admit of interpretation in terms of one ultimate principle which is fundamental to the Chinaman's thoughts of Heaven and Earth. This is the principle of established order. The Chinese mind is possessed by a settled conviction of the reign of law in the universe, known to him from remotest antiquity as Tao.[1]

It is to Lao-tse, the first sage of Taoism, that we are indebted for the profoundest exposition of this idea. In the Tao-Teh King, which is traditionally ascribed to him,[2] he

[1] *Cf.* W. E. Soothill, *The Three Relig. of China*, p. 18. "The three cults may not be considered as mutually exclusive. All three claim to teach Tao, or the order of the universe as it relates to mankind, but they possess no satisfactory term for religion."

[2] In the opinion of H. A. Giles, *Confucianism and its Rivals*, p. 147, "It is practically certain that this book was pieced together, perhaps in the second century B.C., by a not too skilful forger. Sayings attributed to Lao Tzu were collected from all sources, and padded out with a supplementary text, which, when not unintelligible,

treats with brevity and baffling obscurity of the Tao as the ultimate explanation of all things that are. Groping his way towards it along obscure paths, he seems to see it dimly behind and beyond and antecedent to even the greatest of the spirits worshipped by his people. "I know not whose son it is," he writes. "It appears to have been before Ti." [1] Unexplained in its origin, spontaneous and inexhaustible in its operation; it is universal, mysterious, inscrutable, indefinable, and apparently impersonal; but it is that to which all else owes its being, on which all else depends, and by which all else is governed. Good men work according to its requirements, and prosper: evil men oppose themselves to it, and are overthrown. Confucius, whose influence has so far exceeded that of Lao-tse, was not equal to such exalted flights of thought on the metaphysical aspects of the Tao; but he was not less convinced of the reality of its existence and of its government of men, and of the urgent necessity for endeavouring to conform the state to the laws of its providential control. To that end he re-published the ancient classics of China for the benefit of a degenerate age, intending that men should learn from them the rites and ceremonies and the standards of moral conduct which prevailed in the days when the Tao was duly regarded and the state flourished. Clearly, in its doctrine of *dhamma*, or impersonal law, Buddhism would find a highly important point of contact with all this.

In the proposal that men should conform their lives to the law of their nature and of the world, there is an assumption that they possess within themselves the power to do this. Lao-tse is content simply to assume that it is so; Confucius plainly states it. Human nature is declared by him to be essentially good, and, though liable to corruption, it is capable by its own unaided powers of resisting the world's temptations and of attaining to perfect righteousness. Lao-tse is equally convinced, but according to him the goal is to be achieved, not by any exertion of power, but by retiring into oneself. The ethical deductions which he draws from the idea of the Tao are of a quietist nature. The righteous man

is absurd." He admits, however, that it is "probable that some such person as Lao Tzu, even though confused with the Yellow Emperor, did actually exist at some remote period, and that he is responsible for the more intelligible portions of the Tao Te Ching" (p. 148).

[1] Ch. iv.

is he who practises the effortless peace that belongs to the Tao, the peace that begets right action spontaneously. All ambition and every purposeful action must be renounced: inaction must be cultivated. It is not profitable to strive after any form of righteousness, but only to become one with that central harmony from which all righteousness proceeds. In early Taoist times there were, therefore, some who withdrew from the world to live in complete seclusion, to fast, and to practise various breathing exercises which were believed to promote assimilation to the Tao and to lengthen the duration of man's earthly life. But Taoist monachism has never proved a success: nor has the Taoist philosophy ever moved the masses. In its stead there exists among them a belief in the necessity for a knowledge of the most propitious times at which to perform important acts, and a ready credulity in the *tao-shi*, or doctors, who claim to be able to provide this information; while a system of magic and exorcism has grown up, in which the doctors pretend to ability, by reason of their self-discipline and consequent association with the Tao, to bring the virtue and power of the *shen* (good spirits) to bear upon the hostility of the *kwei* (evil spirits). This demands some slight measure of disciplinary asceticism on their part,[1] but none on that of the lay adherents of Taoism.

Confucius provides an abundance of practical moral and political teaching, all of which is based upon the same fundamental idea as that to which Lao-tse strove to give philosophical expression, though it is directly opposed to Lao-tse's doctrine of inaction. The right way, the way that is in accordance with the universal Tao, is indicated for states and families and individuals, and a careful portrait is drawn of "the superior man." For the attainment of perfect righteousness constant effort and "reverential carefulness" in the work of self-cultivation are necessary.[2] "The superior man learns to attain his Tao as the mechanic sits in his shop to accomplish his work." He must first of all clearly conceive the true ideal; and then, in the light of that knowledge, he must set his heart on righteousness, and gradually bring order first into his own life, and afterwards into that of his family, and so into the life of the state. The

[1] Since the 10th century they have been required to practise celibacy.

[2] *Confucian Analects*, xiv. 45.

methods proposed constitute the very mildest of asceticisms, yet they undoubtedly involve self-discipline in respect of both renunciation and toil. For the ideal proposed is that of a very moderate, mild, and humble-minded man, who makes a temperate use of food and enjoyment,[1] practises charity, and invariably behaves with the utmost gravity and decorum. He is at pains to show all due consideration to others, and to refrain himself from acting in a manner which would occasion his own displeasure were he to receive similar treatment. Moderation and courteous consideration are the keynotes of this ideal, and the way of attainment is just diligent attention to the records of the great ones of bygone days when the Tao was duly observed, followed by self-examination and patient self-training. Among the educated classes of the Chinese this system of independent self-government has hitherto held sole sway; while the masses have made use of the brief moral maxims of The Book of Rewards and Punishments and The Book of Secret Blessings, two non-philosophical Taoist works of great popularity.

The goal proposed in Chinese Buddhism is no longer, as in the original Buddhism, individual deliverance from the existing order, but the progressive attainment of righteousness and power. The saint becomes in turn deva, arhat, and bodhisattva, achieving in this final stage the ability to serve mankind by bringing others to a like blessedness. The method is obedience to the commandments of the Sutra known as Brahma's Net; and a monastic life is prescribed for those who would give themselves to the observance of this higher law. In the monasteries they practise vegetarianism, make public confession of sin at regular intervals, and perform the work of contemplation; but their asceticism is normally characterised by an unmistakable lukewarmness, and their general moral standard is only too frequently lower than that of the common people living in their neighbourhood. Genuine enthusiasts are, however, to be found. The discipline of the Lu tsung is notably severe, and there are many instances of individuals belonging to various schools, who have lived as hermits in mountain-caves and huts, enduring the greatest rigours for many years.

It is the belief of the monks that, while they are thus

[1] "He who aims to be a man of complete virtue, in his food does not seek to gratify his appetite, nor in his dwelling-place does he seek the appliances of ease" (*Confucian Analects*, i. 14).

engaged in carrying on their training, they are able to assist the beneficent working of the *dhamma* or *Tao* by various methods of ascetic toil. Desire is understood to have a creative power. They therefore practise concentration of thought on any blessedness which is desired for others, in the conviction that this will contribute to its realisation. The recitation of sacred texts and the delivery of sermons on them is also supposed to be efficacious in increasing righteousness, since it drives away demons. And a like result is thought to be achieved by the performance of elaborate religious ceremonies.

While the people make considerable use of Buddhist monks in order to obtain through their agency the favours of the gods they worship, their own practice of Buddhism is for the most part devoid of disciplinary asceticism. The general sense of necessity for stricter conformity with the Tao in a particularly critical or important matter leads some, however, to adopt temporarily the practice of abstention from flesh food, and others to make arduous pilgrimages to sacred shrines.

In Greece the simple life was advocated by Antisthenes, who saw man dangerously at variance with his environment by the unnatural complexity and conventionality of the social order, and was constrained to urge him to return to nature by abandoning the many artificialities in which his life had become entangled. He represented man's true happiness as consisting in the exercise of his natural ability, freedom from every bond, and independence of all convention. " Nature " is opposed to " culture " and social organisation and discipline, and is to be recovered only by revolt and renunciation. Simplicity of life was practised, therefore, and there was a strong tendency to exaggerate the simplicity by reason of the spirit of protest in which the practice was undertaken.[1] The affections were to be subdued, since they

[1] " Ascetic bravado," as G. H. Rendall calls it in his introduction to *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to Himself*, p. xlv. " Positive value and professional éclat were attached to abstinences and mortifications, whose sole moral justification lay in the reduction of external needs ; the virtues of simplicity and temperance were caricatured in exhibitions of mendicancy, dirt, and foul diet ; all forms of regard for social *convenance*—delicacy or decency or civility—were ranked as weak subservience, as apostasies from idiosyncrasy ; to be ' naked and unashamed ' became a chief part of vocation, and the test of moral independence."

militated against autonomy; and bodily wants were to be reduced to a minimum and barely satisfied. One article of clothing was held to be sufficient; life was lived in the open air, or under the rudest shelter; and food was limited to dried figs, lupins, peeled barley, and water.

Associated with Cynicism in its practice, Stoicism established itself more securely on a basis of natural law, and gave philosophic expression to the idea of "the Necessity behind the gods," from which it deduced the need of self-discipline in order to make a virtue of necessity. The world is represented by Zeno, borrowing from the old Ionian philosophers, as a single living substance, which is Reason, or God. Part of it, which is more particularly the Divine Being, remains in its original state of fiery ether, and constitutes the immanent directing power of the universe: the rest is transmuted into more grossly material forms, and becomes the earth, air, fire, and water, upon which this force constantly acts. All is therefore controlled by an inescapable destiny, or rather providence; chance is wholly eliminated; and the universe moves forward surely to its appointed goal, which is absorption in the divine fire. Beyond that lies an infinite series of such world-formations and re-absorptions.

The Stoics owed much to the practice of the Cynics in their endeavour after self-sufficiency and control of the emotions, but they rejected the Cynic disregard for the decencies of life and their more eccentric forms of asceticism. "The wise man" was conceived as one who is capable of comprehending that the general result of all that happens is bound to be right, though the details with which he in particular is faced may not obviously contribute to this end. By the light of the reason that is in him, a reason akin to the Reason that is in the world, he will understand, and will steel himself to suffer these things as though they were not.[1] For only so may peace of mind be had. He will school himself to a life of temperance, instead of yielding to the

[1] *Cf.* M. Aurelius, ix. 1. "Not to be indifferent to pain or pleasure, death or life, evil report or good report, all which Nature treats indifferently, is plainly to be guilty of sin. By Nature treating them indifferently, I mean that they befall indifferently all whose existence is consequent upon the original impulse of providence, which gave the origin and first momentum to the cosmic ordering of things, by selecting certain germs of future existences, and assigning to them productive capacities of realisation, change, and phenomenal succession."

desire for self-indulgence; he will train himself to display courage in place of cowardice; he will check self-assertion and accustom himself to do justice to all men; and, above all, he will behave prudently in every undertaking. So will he become independent of fortune, unruffled by passion, untroubled by pain and adversity. To accomplish this wisdom, which is virtue, the ordinary man must detach himself from all that is likely to impede him,[1] and then deliberately embark on a prolonged [2] course of self-training, or rather, self-repression, attended by daily self-examination, and supplemented by an active service of his fellow-men in which, without pity and without concern for the success of his efforts, he labours to do what is his duty.

Until the second century after Christ many philosopher-ascetics were to be found exercising themselves after this fashion and leading disciplined lives which contrasted strongly with the prevailing luxury of the age. From that time onward the power of Stoicism waned; but its influence was never wholly lost, and to-day there are considerable numbers of people whose moral sympathies lie mainly with the teaching of Seneca, of Epictetus, and above all of Marcus Aurelius. In modern Europe and in America some are living in a disciplined revolt against our modern civilisation; many more, having made observation of the laws which govern man's physical life, propose to themselves a course of moral self-control which shall conserve their energies and ensure lasting happiness. "Be temperate in thine enjoyment, and chaste in thy pleasures," recommends the materialist Baron d'Holbach, "because voluptuousness begets weariness, intemperance engenders disease." Yet others are moved to the exercise of the same care by knowledge, or even a vague general appreciation, of the modern

[1] *Cf.* Seneca, *Epis.* xxv. 4. "But do you yourself, as indeed you are doing, show me that you are stout-hearted; lighten your baggage for the march. None of our possessions is essential. Let us return to the law of nature; for then riches are laid up for us. The things which we actually need are free for all, or else cheap; nature craves only bread and water."

[2] "The doctrine of progress is not peculiar to Stoicism, but it is nevertheless an essential feature of it." E. V. Arnold, *Roman Stoicism*, p. 326. *Cf.* Epictetus, *Disc.* i. 4, 18. "What then is progress? If any of you, withdrawing himself from externals, turns to his own will to exercise it and to improve it by his own labours." And Seneca, *De vita beata*, p. 17. "It is enough for me to take away daily something from my faults and daily to reject my errors."

scientific interpretation of the universe.[1] Theological doctrine does not interest them; but they are satisfied that here is a definite order of things, regulated by laws which may be clearly perceived, available for the use and delight of man if he will but play the game, that is observe the rules. This means living an ordered life; and many are content to do it, as a purely practical common-sense measure.

Modern philosophic asceticism resembles Stoicism again in that it is frequently undertaken as a preparation for sudden temptation of an unusually serious nature or for grievous misfortune. "Life is more like wrestling than dancing," wrote Marcus Aurelius "It must be ready to keep its feet against all onsets however unexpected."[2] Seneca advises Lucilius, "Set aside a certain number of days, during which you shall be content with the scantiest and cheapest fare, with coarse and rough dress, saying to yourself the while: 'Is this the condition that I feared?' It is precisely in times of immunity from care that the soul should toughen itself beforehand for occasions of greater stress, and it is while Fortune is kind that it should fortify itself against her violence. . . . If you would not have a man flinch when the crisis comes, train him before it comes."[3] William James, the American psychologist, has renewed the counsel for the benefit of the present generation, and there are not a few who deem it wise to act on his oft-quoted recommendation to perform every two or three days some act which goes against the grain.

In the East the endeavour to conform to cosmic order is largely supplemented by religious forms, which provide an outlet for the emotions and supply some of its deficiencies. This is true at least so far as the masses of the people are concerned. The philosopher Confucianist or Buddhist no doubt stands nearer to the Western, non-religious type, and shares with the modern Cynic or Stoic the serious limitations of his life-plan. With an obvious attraction for characters possessed of a measure of force and virility, the system has but little appeal for those who have passed their first strength or are already broken with sorrow and suffering. "Be strong" is its only message. It proposes no moderation of

[1] "The creed of many modern scientists has affinities to Stoicism" (W. R. Inge, *The Phil. of Plotinus*, ii. 247).

[2] vii. 61.

[3] *Epis.* xviii. 5, 6.

the storms which beat on the heads of unfortunates, but recommends that they shall harden themselves to endure, without shrinking or complaint, what cannot be cured. "All is well" is the cold assurance it offers. So far as the man who is burdened with a sense of sin is concerned, it shows itself ready to deliver him lightly from the reproaches of an uneasy conscience; but, as to the future, he is merely instructed to take stern measures with himself, to play the man, and to shake off the weakness that involves him in wrong action: which means that he is recommended to do just that which he cannot find it in him to begin to do.

Incapable of effecting transformation of character, its sole power lies in the intensification of those qualities to which it makes its original appeal. Manliness is the word in which they are usually summed up. It is held to be proof of true manliness when men have become so strong in action and endurance that they are able to show unyielding hardness, forceful determination, and an unbreakable spirit of independence in every circumstance. This is the declared goal of such systems of ethical practice, and the common result where they are faithfully observed. Other men come to be regarded with contemptuous pity or with unconcealed scorn as weaklings, separated by a wide gulf from the man who has trained himself to be a true man and has a proud consciousness of the full measure of his self-control and of the degree of strain which he is capable of bearing: and such feelings as these successfully neutralise any capacity for service which may exist in those who cherish them. Such disdainful superiority is invariably brought low if a man but lives long enough; but it is ugly while it lasts.

It must further be reckoned against such philosophic ascetic systems that they suggest utter helplessness, while they inspire a gesture of proud protest, in the presence of evil in the world, instead of promoting an attempt to overcome what is wrong. Under their influence men assume the defensive against an order of things which threatens them, and school themselves to withstand its blows as they fall. Superior to other men and aloof from them, they are also superior to nature itself while they live, co-operating with it in their discipline through no sense of fellowship, but only in order to hold it at arm's length and maintain their independence. There is always present to their minds a certain apprehension of evil which must be reckoned with,

including death, the final effort, and they stand on guard, brave and undaunted, conscious, however, that in the end it will assert its power over them though it has failed to weaken their resolution or break their pride of spirit. In the East there has been less of defiance, but more of unprogressive acceptance and unchanging observance. The conception of a fixed order has no doubt had much to do with oriental inability to deliver itself from the dead hand of the past and from ineffective negativism in the ordering of social life. The spirit of protection and preservation has hitherto reigned, but not the spirit of adventurous enterprise.

The fundamental error in the West is, however, the ignoring of God. Whatever intellectual admission of the existence of a divine power there may be, the fact is that that power is not recognised as a Person with whom relations may be entered into, and that, while the ascetic moralist is busying himself in the attempt to deal understandingly with a system of impersonal law which nearly affects him, there is, behind this law, a Being who seeks more than obedience. When the emotions are regarded as traitors and sternly repressed in the mistaken belief that a cold intellectualism and a strong will are more profitable for righteousness, the most direct means of discovering God's love are deliberately conveyed away. Defensive warfare is undertaken in proud isolation, and a losing battle is fought out by man as though he were a puny god committed to strife with the elements, instead of a child of God, utterly dependent upon the resources of his Father's love.

3

In Judaism and in Islam the laws by which the conception of man's righteousness is governed are regarded as being ultimately dependent upon the will of God. They are recognised in the order of nature no less than by those who profess the religions and philosophies considered in the previous section; but they are referred ultimately to the direction of a Personal Lawgiver whose will they embody, and there is consequently the possibility of a wholly different attitude on the part of the individual worshipper towards the laws by which he endeavours to rule his life. The personal relationship which he enjoys delivers the seeker after righteousness from the spirit of self-defence and of

arrogant or sullen defiance in the discipline he undertakes, it invests any accepted tabus with an intelligibility which militates against their unthinking and superstitious observance; and it co-ordinates a comprehensive and varied system of regulations by relating them all to the authority of a single Mind. The last point is of special importance. It is commonly supposed that legalism lacks just this unity which is here claimed for it; but that is because attention is given to the formalists who, forgetting the Lawgiver in their zealous discharge of the details of the Law, are guilty of a complete perversion of the system which they are held to represent. No doubt this formalism is abundantly evident among Jews and Muslims alike at various periods of their history; yet the true representatives of Judaism at any rate are those who love God and delight to do His will as it is contained in His revealed law.[1]

In the pre-prophetic period of the religious history of the people of Israel the customary morality and ritual observance of the people involved scarcely anything of asceticism; but the existence of an ascetic spirit is marked by the emergence of the Rechabites, determined opponents of the more luxurious ways of the peoples of Canaan, and by the self-oblation of the Nazirites, who from the time of the Judges until the beginning of the Christian era, were accustomed to live a consecrated life under special vows, for a limited period or for life. With a new emphasis on individual responsibility and social obligation, and with a proper appreciation of moral values which subordinated conventional religious observances to the recognition of the claims of truth and justice, the prophets called the men of their day to an asceticism of renunciation which could not have been wholly rejected, though the response was not sufficient to save the nation. During the Exile the sense of individual relationship with God was greatly strengthened, and the way was prepared for that scrupulous individual regard for the divine ordinances which represented the essential conditions for the preservation of the Covenant relationship between God and His people. A long-continued process of combination, development, and reconstruction was then begun by students of the Torah, the "pointing out," the "direction" or

[1] C. G. Montefiore has done good service to his own religion and to the cause of truth in emphasising this fact with convincing moderation.

"instruction," of God, and by the time of Ezra it had already become necessary to gather together the results of this work and to formulate them in a code which was severe beyond anything hitherto observed by the Jews. Sabbath observance was specified in considerable detail and strictly enforced, mixed marriages were undone by a renunciation accomplished in the name of righteousness, and for the maintenance of the temple services heavy taxes were paid year by year.[1] Until the death of Simon the Just in 270 B.C., this process of the transmission and interpretation of the Law was in the hands of the Soferim, who incorporated in the text the slight additions which they made. After a break of about eighty years the work of authoritative exposition was resumed, on the institution of the Sanhedrin; and, while the Sadducees stood for the recognition of newer customary observances under cover of the deduction from the Law which was known as Midrash, the Hasidim maintained that the Law must be held to include both the written law and the oral, and that the latter was of equal authority with the former. Both contentions led to a renewed study of the Torah, to an increasing volume of interpretation, and to a growth of observance in daily life involving not a little asceticism.[2]

The Hasidim were moved by an intense zeal for the preservation of their national religion in a time of fierce persecution, and gave themselves to an almost fanatical practice of asceticism based on an exaggeration of the requirements of the Law. They did not live in communities, like the Essenes, nor did they forswear marriage, since the Law permitted it. But they devoted many hours daily to the performance of spiritual exercises, and they fasted to such excess that they suffered great mortality from enteric diseases.

The Pharisees, who "were virtually the Hasidim over again, under another name," [3] with less fanaticism but with unabated enthusiasm, developed the Law so as to make it cover entirely the civil and social aspects of the national life as well as the moral and ceremonial, and set themselves to practise, and as far as possible to enforce on others, the

[1] See E. Bevan, *Jerusalem under the High-Priests*, p. 9 f.

[2] See J. Z. Lauterbach in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, new series, v. 503 ff., and vi. 23 ff., and 303 ff.

[3] R. T. Herford, *Pharisaism, its Aim and its Method*, p. 41.

full range of the Law's requirements. Every department of life was planned out and codified ; nothing was left doubtful ; each problem was dealt with as it arose, and the decision was included in the body of standing traditions known as Halachah (" walking," *i.e.* every-day practice). This is the inevitable issue of the adoption and faithful observance of legalistic religion. " If we set out to avoid every contact with what is unclean, we must above all things observe in the strictest possible way every direction of the Law. But the moment we try to do so, we are confronted in our every-day life with a thousand doubtful questions ; no code can give more than general rules, which need continual sharper definition as they are applied to practice. The Law, for instance, can tell us to do no work and to carry no burden on the Sabbath day, but if we are to run no risk of transgressing we must know what exactly constitutes ' work ' and what constitutes a ' burden.' It is easy to laugh at the absurd pettiness of the questions with which the Pharisees came in time to be occupied, whether one might eat an egg laid on the Sabbath, and so on ; but if you once set out in making conformity to a written code the guiding principle of your life, I should like to know where you are to stop short of such questions." [1]

The Essenes and the Therapeutæ do not stand in the same line of development as the Hasidim and the Pharisees, but are to be classed with the Rechabites and the Nazirites as representing independent movements of a markedly ascetic type indicating the emergence among the Jews of the monastic spirit. Righteousness was for the members of these groups nothing less than self-surrender to a special mode of life ; and, while they stand aloof from the main type of Jewish religious evolution, they serve as a striking testimony to the existence of ascetic tendencies among a people which has yet failed to develop a true and lasting type of vocational asceticism. Judaism remains a religion of the Law, and its disciplinary asceticism is confined to direct conformity with written and traditional requirements having general reference.

Muslims differ from Jews in the matter of ascetic practice, in that they have made a large use of mystical asceticism from an early date in their history. But, so far as disciplinary asceticism is concerned, they closely

[1] E. Bevan, *Jerusalem under the High-Priests*, p. 121 f.

resemble the Jews in the spirit of their endeavour to conform to the known will of Allah. According to their belief this was revealed to the prophet and delivered by him to his immediate followers; there are also many traditions available, giving further information concerning Muhammad's life and teaching: the interpretation of the inspired Qur'an has been made by learned doctors whose comments have been preserved: this book and the mass of teaching associated with it may be believed, therefore, to contain all that is needed or can be desired for such guidance in the ordinary daily routine of worship and conduct, including all social, civil, and political action. This need not be supposed to be an oppressive and almost unbearable burden bound upon the shoulders of Muslims, for, as Dr. Herford says in reference to the Jews, "To say that the mass of detail and minute precepts of the Halachah was, or must have been, oppressive to the ordinary Jew, is as true, or untrue, as to say that the ordinary Englishman is oppressed by the mass of detail and minute precept in the body of statute and common law by which his actions as a citizen are regulated, and which he is presumed to know." [1] Yet the Muslim cannot escape a measure of ascetic self-discipline in discharging his code of righteousness.

Every Muslim is under obligation to perform the five practical duties of his religion, the five foundation pillars as they are called, namely, the recitation of the formula of belief; the offering of prayer five times daily, consisting principally of prescribed movements and accompanied by purificatory ablutions requiring to be carried out in accordance with precise instructions; fasting during the month Ramadan; the giving of alms to the poor according to a fixed proportion; and the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime.[2] In addition to these necessary duties, voluntary fasts of varying length and severity are recommended for the mortification of the body; swine's flesh, the flesh of idol sacrifices, blood, and strong drink are absolutely prohibited; and there is a formidable list of

[1] *Pharisaism, its Aim and its Method*, p. 99 f.

[2] "To perform the *hajj* by proxy is not permitted by the Sunnis, while it is not uncommon among their rivals. This permission, if granted, would violate the cardinal Sunni requirement that a Muslim must perform the *hajj* at least once during his lifetime" (W. M. Patton in E.R.E. xii. 118).

regulations concerning clean and unclean foods of every kind.

In all this there are very clear indications of the weight of the dead hand of the past. The particularism of both the Jewish and the Muslim codes serves to perpetuate practices which are markedly the product of a bygone age, to impose upon people living under the widely varying conditions of modern life the standards of a particular people and country at a particular time. Moral and social progress is conditioned by the necessity for constant modification of the content of the Law by abandonment, supplement, and re-interpretation, a process which is seen to be altogether illogical when it is understood that the authority of the Law is external, enshrined in inspired communications and not in the heart and conscience of the individual. For the essence of legalistic religion is that the rightness or wrongness of man's conduct is determined solely by the authority of the Lawgiver, and that man must trust not to his conscience but to the Law-book for direction. Attention to the precepts of the Law provides a certain education of the conscience, it is true, but only such an education as is bounded by the limits of the Law, governed by its content and emphasis, and restricted from advancing to the task of criticism.

As a result of the minute prescription of detail, especially ceremonial detail, contained in the Law, there is found not only a great deal of formalism and scrupulosity, but also a tendency to adopt a false scale of values, by which correctness in comparatively trifling matters is allowed to outweigh the weightier matters of the Law. The sense of proportion is lost, and to eat or to pray with unwashen hands comes to be regarded as a greater offence than to tell a lie. There are Muslims, for example, who would shrink with genuine horror from the use of a tin of meat, for fear of defilement, who nevertheless count themselves free to commit adultery as often as they choose.

And though the requirements of the Law are many, they are all known, and a man's moral performance may therefore be readily estimated and his position in God's sight unfailingly reckoned. External observance is the sole criterion : the greatest formalist, and the most uncompromising hypocrite who avails himself unblushingly of frauds and pious subterfuges, may assure themselves

without any difficulty that they are "religious" and acceptable beyond their fellows.

The temptation of the earnest ascetic working to such codes is plainly the temptation to go beyond what is specified as necessary, and so to win merit. Seeking to fulfil all righteousness he discharges the Law with zealous exactitude, and then proceeds to add to his obligatory service something over and above the requirements of the Law, so that he may the more securely establish his position. He may be moved by a truly religious desire to serve his God, or by a disturbing apprehension and fear of the consequences of sin in the world to come, or again by a satisfied sense of self-righteousness which takes pleasure in voluntarily effecting its own increase. While this has attended certain phases, at least, of the history of Judaism, it has marked the course of Islam with steady consistency; and catching the spirit of the ascetic, the ordinary Muslim, who performs no works of supererogation, has come to look on his performance of the five practical duties as essentially meritorious. "The Moslem fulfils the law," says Gottfried Simon,[1] "not that he may be good, but in order to gain merit in the sight of God. The Mohammedan is full of zeal not for the sake of moral perfection, but in the hope of gaining sufficient merit to give vent to unbridled licence. That correct moral behaviour in all the circumstances of life will open the gate of heaven is not a Moslem conception, but rather that actual individual acts acquire so much definite merit. Instruction in itself is of little value, but it is a meritorious act to undergo instruction at the cost of so much time and money. The important thing is not that I should avoid transgression, but that I should observe as many months and days of fasting as possible; not that I should conduct my money affairs honestly, but that I should give as much alms as possible; because every individual almsgiving entitles me to a definite privilege in eternity."

4

Righteousness as conformity with the demands of Love is peculiar to Christianity, in which alone the requisite conditions for such an ethical system exist. It is the faith of Christians that a personal God, revealed through the

[1] *The Progress and Arrest of Islam in Sumatra*, p. 177.

Sacrifice of the Cross as infinite Love and perfect Righteousness, has bridged the gulf created by man's sin; and that He wins through His travail an answering love in the heart of man, out of which He creates the desire to do Him loyal service. Writing His will on the heart and in the conscience, He presents no mere system of natural law with which it would be well to agree, nor any detailed code of observance to be applied indiscriminately and discharged grudgingly or formally or self-righteously; but through an intimate personal relationship with every individual He induces a sense of shame, and a strong desire to cast out that on which the shame is centred, to do all that befits one who enjoys the great privilege of divine fellowship, and thus to become less unworthy of the Love which has renounced, suffered, and toiled so greatly. Further, this relationship with God through Christ Jesus lifts from the soul the burden of guilt, conveys assurance of deliverance from evil, and inspires confidence in future progress. It is realised that God is on the side of the sinner against the sinfulness that is in him but no longer of him, aiding him powerfully in the work of freeing himself from it. He sorrows with him in every failure, and rejoices with him in every overthrow of evil: He helps him to lay wise plans and to put forth new strength, and leads him on by paths of companionship and love, the love which sums up every ancient law in so far as it was true, and supersedes it in so far as it was defective and wrong.

Natural law is not done away: codes of law still retain a suggestive value. But both of these are regarded from a new and very different standpoint. To be required to live in charity with God and man and by so doing to fulfil all righteousness, does not mean that the Christian is free to become a law unto himself, or that he may safely trust himself to every successive impulse of his yet imperfect love in his daily life. In the interpretation and application of the law of love the life and teaching of Jesus Christ must serve as the permanent standard of reference: and the individual conscience must be guided by the corporate conscience of the Christian Society as well as by the direct enlightenment which it receives from the Holy Spirit. Arbitrary interpretation must be checked by reference to the common mind, and wrong action must be amended by counsel and by disciplinary correction. Unless God's

sovereignty is to be flouted and the holiness of His love denied, it will not suffice to live in any haphazard manner. A rule of life must be observed which makes provision for the stated times of prayer; the practice of bodily abstinence and spiritual humility; the limitation and strict account of expenditure, for the avoidance of selfishness, ostentation, or luxury; and the honest performance of every accepted task. Further, it must provide for exercise intended to assist in the formation of good habits and to promote a general increase of self-control, and for disciplinary measures devised in order to lead the soul to a clearer perception of its true state and a keener appreciation of its need. To this there is sometimes added a special discipline undertaken as a means of self-punishment for specific acts of failure.

The Church received from Christ as its general and invariable rule of life that threefold discipline of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, which He carried over from the Judaism of His day and interpreted anew to His followers. In this the individual Christian found a suggestive outline of his conduct toward himself, toward his neighbour, and toward his God, without any loss of his inalienable freedom to devise his own rule of life in accordance with his personal standard of interpretation of the law of love, the only law by which he was bound. Simple in form, but capable of indefinite interpretation and expansion, the rule left to him the right to interpret the whole and to stress any of its parts according to his needs and the voice of his conscience; but it mapped out in the simplest possible way the ground he must cover, so that no part should be lost sight of, and it assisted him to preserve a true balance in respect of the ideals by which his life must be governed.

The study of the Gospels revealed the fact, however, that, in addition to these precepts which were obligatory upon every Christian, our Lord had recommended to particular individuals certain counsels of perfection: and there began to be those who strove after the higher degree of righteousness which, as it seemed to them, was indicated by these counsels. Thus there grew up the conception of an obligatory morality and an optional morality, of a lesser degree of perfection and of a greater degree of perfection, of a standard of Christian life which was compatible with marriage, the retention of possessions, and the exercise of personal choice and of worldly place and power, and over

against that a yet higher standard of Christian life, the truly perfect life, which involved renunciation of the life of the world, and the acceptance of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Down through the middle ages until the time of the Reformation this conception of the double standard persisted. The "religious" life was the life of the monastery: life in the world was accounted something less. Vocation to the monastic life was regarded as the calling of God: no such calling was associated with the pursuit of the morally and spiritually inferior way which attended the acceptance of some worldly occupation or form of service. Sainthood was possible to the many in the "dedicated" life: it was a rarer thing in the outer world where life offered little or no possibility of an equivalent degree of dedication.

Protestant reaction against this conception and practice of a higher and a lower form of Christian life unduly depreciated the former, while it rightly exalted the latter: and in vigorously asserting a single standard for all Christians it failed to do justice to the infinite variety of standards which are comprised in the practical operation of the law of love. "Are all called to be ministers? Are all called to be missionaries? Is the same measure of self-sacrifice demanded from every child of God? Are there no special centres of danger, no forlorn hopes in the King's army? Is the sacrifice of Abraham—'thy son, thine only son Isaac'—an incident in every life? Is the command: 'Go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor', of universal application? Are there no martyrs, whose glorious end we could no longer imitate however much our desire? When put in this form the question answers itself."[1] Cassian saw this and declared it very plainly in words which must carry conviction to every honest observer of the inequality of men and the variety of the circumstances of men's lives. "No uniform crown of perfection," he says,[2] "can be offered to all men, because all have not the same virtue, or purpose, or fervour, and so the Divine Word has in some way appointed different ranks and different measures of perfection itself."

Nor was the broad distinction between the life lived in the world and the life lived in a dedicated separateness without justification, though it has the disadvantage of

[1] H. B. Workman, *The Evol. of the Monast. Ideal*, p. 335 f.
[2] *Collationes*, xi. 12.

suggesting that there are but two standards or stages of perfection instead of many. "We speak of the soldier's vocation, the engineer's vocation, the vocation to the married state or common vocation," writes Dom Paul Delatte.[1] "These are actual states, the result of strictly personal choice, the product of circumstances, aptitudes, and tastes. Doubtless these choices do not escape the laws of Providence, yet they do not imply a very special invitation of God, as does

[1] *The Rule of St. Benedict*, p. 368. *Cf.* R. W. Church, *University and Cathedral Sermons*, pp. 256–261. "This is a definite character put before us in Scripture—a servant of God—in the sense that there are men who have, or aim at having, no other service; who here on earth, consciously, and of set purpose, devote life to one great, engrossing employment, not for themselves, but for Him; a service as hard and trying to flesh and blood, as it yet fills and satisfies the soul. Such service is distinguished, on the one hand, from the service which all good men render to God in their several callings in the world; on the other, from the service done by men, who are rather God's instruments than His servants."

As striking modern examples of this vocation Father William Doyle, S.J., and Charles de Foucauld, may be instanced. On May 8, 1914, the former wrote (A. O'Rahilly, *Father William Doyle, S.J.*, p. 152), "My way is sure. I think I can say now without a shade of doubt or hesitation that the path by which Jesus wants me to walk is that of *absolute abandonment of all human comfort and pleasure and the embracing as far as I can of every discomfort and pain.* Every time I see a picture of the crucifixion or a cross, I feel strangely affected and drawn to the life of immolation in a strange way. The heroism of Jesus appeals to me; His 'naked crucifixion' calls to me and it gives me great consolation and peace to offer myself to Him on the cross for this perpetual living crucifixion. How often does He not seem to say to me in prayer, 'I would have you strip yourself of all things—every tiny particle of self-indulgence, and this ever and always? Give Me *all* and I will make you a great saint.' This, then, is the price of my life-long yearning for sanctification. O Jesus, I am so weak, help me to give You all and to do it *now*."

As to the other, "Imagine a traveller some eight or ten years ago passing through the country of the savage Tuareg tribes in the middle of the Sahara. He would have found there a man, obviously a Frenchman, living quite alone; spending most of his time in prayer and the rest in study; saying Mass daily without any assistant, by special papal dispensation, since there might not be another Christian within hundreds of miles; and regarded with the greatest respect by all the natives and called by them 'the Christian marabout.' And, if he pursued his inquiries, he would find out that this shabby, middle-aged ascetic was Charles de Foucauld, a French viscount; a distinguished soldier in his young days; one of the earliest explorers of Morocco, with a brilliant exploit in disguise to his credit; who, just when the world seemed at his feet, threw it all up for this." (G. C. Rawlinson in *Theology*, Feb. 1922, p. 86).

vocation properly so called. This comprises three elements: a special call of God—to a high supernatural state—to which call the intelligent creature should respond with free co-operation." The state to which such a vocation summons is perhaps not advisedly known as "religious," because the appropriation of the name suggests that other states are less than religious: nor is it justifiable to regard it as invariably constituting a higher and better way over against an inferior one, for there are ways of consecrated service in the world which may be held to match the life of the most devoted "religious." But it does stand apart with a character of its own, and it does certainly demand the recognition of two broadly distinctive types of Christian service and effort, each of them capable of advancing those who are called to them to the highest degree of Christian perfection.[1]

Perfection is not to be reached, however, in the world or in the life that is lived apart, without effort and a measure of ascetic striving. This has been realised in practice by Protestants of earnest mould as well as by Catholics,[2]

[1] This is frankly recognised by theologians of the Roman Church. *Cf.* E. Dublanchy in *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, s.v. "Conseils évangéliques." "Il n'y a point de connexion nécessaire entre la perfection et la pratique des conseils évangéliques. Car la perfection intégrale consiste dans la charité rendue aussi actuelle que possible par une disposition habituelle à faire facilement, constamment et suavement ce que l'on sait être le plus agréable à Dieu, et cette disposition peut régner habituellement dans l'âme sans la pratique des conseils évangéliques. S. Thomas, *Sum. theol.* IIa, IIae, q. clxxxiv. a. 3, sq. C'est ce que prouve d'ailleurs l'histoire de l'Église où abondent les exemples de sainteté dans la vie commune, même dans l'embarras des affaires séculières et dans le gouvernement de la famille." Tome III, col. 1180.

See also, D. U. Berlière, *L'Ordre monastique*, p. 21, "L'idéal proposé, imposé à tous, peut être atteint de différentes manières ou dans un temps plus ou moins long, suivant que la volonté est plus forte et que les moyens sont mieux choisis. C'est ce choix qui établit une distinction entre le précepte at *les conseils*. Ceux-ci n'ont qu'un but: éloigner les obstacles qui s'opposent à l'action plus libre et plus facile, à l'intensité et à la continuité de la charité."

[2] This is evident in Puritanism generally, and more particularly in Methodism and early Evangelicalism. A good example is John Fletcher of Madeley (1729–1785), of whom, after his conversion, G. Lacey May writes (*Theology*, July 1920, p. 20), "His service of God was now nothing if not whole-hearted, being marked by a very real bearing of the Cross. He made it his rule to sit up two whole nights a week for reading, meditation, and prayer. He lived wholly upon

and yet protest is frequently made by Protestant Christians on the score that such effort is opposed to the true spirit of the Christian life. It is represented by them that Christian liberty is entirely inconsistent with the "work-righteousness" of the legalist, and that the deliberate performance of what can only be called "works" is nothing else but a reversion to the legalist position and therefore an effectual cancelling of the true Christian status. Instead of rejoicing in that freedom from the Law which has been purchased once for all by the Blood of Christ, those who live ascetically by rule are represented as voluntarily submitting themselves again to the yoke of the Law, and vainly endeavouring to win redemption anew by their own effort.

It is undoubtedly true that the Christian ascetic in quest of righteousness is exposed to the danger of reversion to legalism, for numerous examples of such reversion are to be found without difficulty among Catholic and Protestant Christians alike. Religious practices which were originally inspired by love may become in time a merely mechanical and routine performance: and discipline which was once free from any thought of merit may acquire a false significance in the course of practice. The strict observance of days and seasons, the constant frequenting of confessional and altar, the strenuous practice of fasting and other bodily mortifications, may grow gradually into a rigid system inflexible as any legalistic code and equally devoid of true religion: while on the other hand, sabbatarianism, teetotalism, and a general puritanism of narrow type, may develop an unlovely character proclaiming such a travesty of Christian liberty that it would be difficult to match it in a purely legal religion. The danger of such declension is certainly present, and necessitates constant watchfulness. Yet it remains necessary for the earnest Christian to practise disciplinary asceticism,

vegetable food, often only bread, milk, and water. This asceticism was a strong feature of early Evangelicalism. In these days, when the ordinary 'Evangelical' would look upon fasting or any stern self-discipline as superstitious, or at least wholly unnecessary, it is startling to find Fletcher thus disciplining himself, or William Wilberforce, somewhat later, following almost exactly the same course of stern fasting and asceticism in many ways. To men of this stamp human nature was too corrupt to be dealt with by easy methods; the knife must be laid at the very root of bodily desires and indulgence."

and it is not difficult to show how widely different it is from its legalistic perversion.

In the first place it is necessary to notice the relation that exists between the ascetic and his rule. He is a free agent, responding only to the claims of Love. He recognises authority, and he seeks counsel: under certain circumstances he may even commit himself wholly to the direction of one whom he trusts; but ultimately he is his own director under the sole lordship of Christ. He does not aim at compliance with a system which has been imposed upon him by external authority, but he himself devises or voluntarily accepts the rule he undertakes, because it commends itself to him as a just expression of the law of charity. The legalist is "under the Law"; the Christian ascetic is master of his rule of life.

For, again, the rule is individual, and not an invariable code, fixed by divine authority, and compulsorily imposed upon all. Such a body of law takes no account, not only of the changing circumstances of men's lives and the growth of their character, but also of their endless variety. All men are not equal to the same burden; all are not fitted to perform the same type of service; what is irksome to one is congenial to another. The Christian law of love is suited to the capacity of all men by reason of its grand scope. It includes more than all that every man can offer, while it is capable of adaptation to the strength of the weakest. The individual Christian is free to accept the general scheme of discipline which is associated with his particular part of the Church, and to modify it and supplement it for himself, according to his needs and powers at the moment. As these change, so he will change his rule, asserting at once his liberty and his bondage in Christ.

The chief point of difference, however, between the legalist code and the ascetic rule of life adopted by the Christian, is that they are regarded as serving entirely different purposes. To the legalist the Law is the all-important basis of right relationship with God, received as containing His ultimate requirements, and observed in the hope of winning the reward of righteousness. The rule of the Christian, on the contrary, is in no sense a covenant or final standard or a means of earning a coveted position, but only a statement in definite form of that which he proposes to himself for the

adequate expression of the moral and spiritual power that has been added to him by grace. The legalist seeks to deserve his position by fulfilling the requirements of his code, but the Christian endeavours to live up to his rule because by the obligation of love he must thus give ethical expression to the sacramental fellowship which he enjoys. Moral failure involves a breach of fellowship for both ; but in the case of the legalist the breach is literally effected by the failure to observe the Law, and is closed by an act of reparation which is equally within his power, whereas in the case of the Christian the act of sin reveals the existence of the breach rather than creates it, and no adjustment is possible by compensation. The ascetic rule of life serves, therefore, not as the basis of a claim to fellowship with Christ, but as a necessary index to the strength of an existing vital relationship, which is in its origin independent of all conduct, but which, unless it produces Christian conduct, may be all too easily dissipated in a baseless emotional satisfaction.

The ascetic training which is undertaken as a preparation for the better discharge of the law of love is largely concerned with known weaknesses and habitual failings. In the light of the results of regular self-examination a systematic effort is made to reduce the frequency of certain recurring offences by strengthening the weak spots in the armour of defence against temptation. Thus, in explanation of the severe self-discipline practised by St. Alphonsus de' Liguori, his biographer says that " He had received from nature, say those who lived with him, an irascible and sanguine temperament, stirred by strong passions and daring resolves. A man endowed with this temperament is a man of desires and enterprises ; of courage in reaching his ends, and of boldness in brushing aside the obstacles he finds in his path. He may become a great saint or a great villain according as he applies his powerful faculties to good or ill, or in other words according as he seeks himself or seeks God. Now as fallen man naturally inclines to self, the more violent the passions are, the more vigorously must the Christian struggle to repress their tendencies and regulate their movements by the Divine will. This it is which explains Alphonsus' self-immolation throughout his life, and especially his exercises of humility, poverty, and mortification. Here we see a man breaking-in his strong character, and fixing

his desires contrary to the bent of vitiated nature, solely upon God." [1]

Against such discipline, whether mild or severe, criticism is levelled along two lines. It is contended that ability for the avoidance of sin and the due performance of good works comes through grace as a natural result of fellowship with Christ, and that it savours of legalism to endeavour to acquire such ability by disciplinary exercise. Much use is commonly made of Dr. Chalmers' phrase, "The expulsive power of a new affection," and of the illustration that "To lighten a dark room one does not need to sweep out the dark." Intimately associated with this is the contention that it is psychologically indefensible to concentrate attention upon that which it is sought to remove. The more the thoughts are allowed to dwell upon positive goodness and the less attention they give to the necessity of avoiding evil, the greater the progress that will be made.

These criticisms have their value, but they are not sufficient to dispose of the necessity for the practice of asceticism. The first of them is vitiated by the assumption contained in Browning's words, "The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound." It is perfectly true that, when fellowship with Christ is enjoyed, the grace of God creates a new disposition of the heart and an access of power. Sin is henceforth regarded with loathing, and already there begins to be a consciousness of mastery over it; but it has yet to be dealt with by the sinner in determined manner. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan *under your feet*" [2] are the words of one who wrote out of a full and hard experience. It is just the grace of God that promotes the desire to do better and gives the power to strive successfully.[3] The illustration of light driving out darkness is completely at fault, for it suggests that, when a man turns to Christ, the Holy Spirit enters in and reveals a perfect heart. The truth is, on the contrary, that, when the light comes, dust and dirt and defilement are revealed, positive defects that

[1] A. Berthe, *Life of St. Alphonsus de' Liguori*, i. 673.

[2] Rom. xvi. 20.

[3] *Cf.* the wise writer of the *Ancren Riwle*, p. 278. "'Sir,' thou answerest me, 'doth God sell his grace?' My dear sisters, although purity is not bought of God, but is given freely, ingratitude resisteth it, and renders those unworthy to possess so excellent a thing who will not cheerfully submit to labour for it."

can be removed only by painstaking effort.[1] For sin is not merely the absence of goodness, but it is a state of lawlessness and rebellion. To behold Goodness is to conceive a distaste for evil, but the evil tendencies remain to be dealt with. This is the fact to which the ascetic refuses to close his eyes. The value of the criticism is that it serves to remind the Christian who subjects himself to disciplinary exercise that, whatever advance he may succeed in accomplishing, the constant acknowledgment must be humbly made, "By the grace of God I am what I am."[2] Victory and progress must be ascribed, never to his own strength, but always to the Holy Spirit of God, who has equipped him for the fight.[3]

The criticism of the psychologist also serves a useful purpose if it succeeds in persuading the ascetic to recall and to make practical use of St. Paul's counsel, "Whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."[4] The mind that occupies itself with worthy thoughts is undoubtedly purified and strengthened by its food; whereas constant occupation with one's own weaknesses and infirmities and the evil that has resulted from them is full of injurious possibility. This is no modern discovery resulting from the study of psychology, though admittedly that study has given it a new emphasis. Walter Hilton, writing in the 14th century, shows a clear apprehension of the principle involved in the recommendation and of its efficacy in practice. "If there arise in thee," he writes, "a remorse or biting of conscience, that thou hast eaten too much, and thereupon thou becomest sad and heavy with overmuch bitterness against thyself,

[1] So, long ago, Macarius thought. "When the divine lamp is lit, it lights up the darkened house, and then the soul beholds its thoughts, how they lie buried in the filth and mire of sin." *Spiritual Homilies*, xi. 4, p. 81.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

[3] *Cf.* R. M. Benson in his *Letters*, p. 168 f. "In teaching the Hindus we should always carefully distinguish between the perfection which their own devotees profess to seek for by mere asceticism, and the Christian practice of asceticism for the purpose of developing the sanctity of God communicated to us as His children in Baptism. St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans would draw out the difference between seeking to constitute some claim with God by works of nature, and seeking to conquer the flesh in the power of the regenerating Spirit."

[4] Phil. iv. 8.

lift up the desire of thy heart to thy good Lord Jesus, and acknowledge thyself a wretch, and a beast, and ask Him forgiveness, and say that thou wilt amend it, and pray that He will forgive thee. Leave off then, and think no further of it, nor strive so much with the vice, as if thou wouldst destroy it utterly, for it is not worth the doing so, neither shalt thou be ever able to bring it about that way; but set thyself about some other business bodily or ghostly, that thereby thou mayest profit more in other virtues, as in humility and charity. For wot thou well, that he that hath in his desire and in his endeavours no other respect to no other thing but Humility and Charity, always crying after them, how he may have them, he shall through such desire and manner of working profit and increase, not only in those two virtues, but also in all other virtues together with them, as in chastity, abstinence and such other (though he have but a little regard to them in comparison of the other, namely, Humility and Charity) more in one year than he should, without the said desire and manner of working, profit in seven years, though he strive against gluttony, lechery and other such continually, and beat himself with scourges each day from morning to even-song time." [1]

It must not be supposed, however, that diversion of interest and sublimation of instinct will best meet every case, or that, where suitable, they will always dispose of the need of asceticism. The former is obviously better suited to the use of the educator who is dealing with another than of the man who is at once educator and educand and cannot really succeed in beguiling himself into forgetfulness of what he is eager to overcome; while the latter, if it be pressed overmuch, may make for the exercise of a quite unnecessary and wasteful degree of ingenuity, when, as it frequently happens, all that is needed to guarantee victory is a sharp frontal attack. It is a modern weakness to suppose that all education can be conducted pleasantly and without serious effort. Will-worship has yielded temporarily to imagination-worship, and both wisdom and goodness are promised on easy terms. If the experience of many generations of saints counts for anything, the results are not likely to

[1] *The Scale of Perfection*, Bk. I., Part III. 8, 3, p. 113 f. *Cf.* E. Underhill, *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*, p. 69 f.; and R. S. Moxon, *The Doctrine of Sin*, p. 234 f., as recent advocates of the same method.

prove very satisfactory. It is tolerably certain that the will, which is after all the whole personality in operation, will assert its right to make full use of the imagination, but will also find it necessary to continue to use direct methods of self-improvement. A wholly negative asceticism built up on mere repression and inhibition is rightly condemned by the psychologist as futile; for the ascetic who sets out with the sole intention of suppressing, uprooting, eliminating and obliterating, is proposing to himself an endless and impossible task and heaping up unlimited trouble, all of which will not give him his desire. But such ascetics are abnormal, not typical; their practical religion is the very antithesis of Christianity. The sane Christian ascetic strives to co-ordinate his personality, to unify his powers, to find a right expression for his desires according to their moral values by subordinating the lower to the higher; and, where he represses, it is with a view to development and enrichment. For repression and development are contributory elements, almost complementary aspects, of any true system of moral training. The psychologist who supposes that right development may be had without any of that direct disciplinary control which is called repression errs as greatly as the fanatical ascetic who has lost sight of development in his furious attention to the work of repression. The one is obsessed by the positive aspect, the other by the negative; and both of them fail to achieve that balanced mastery which results from a Christian self-regimen at once positive and negative.

The rigour of the Christian life being thus plainly declared the novice may be led to ask how long such discipline is generally found to be necessary. The answer is, "Till this life ends." [1] When it is remembered that the same law of love was the controlling principle of the life of the Perfect Man, the Christian will understand that he can never exhaust the possibilities of that law and count himself to have apprehended. He is committed to nothing less than the quest for perfection, the perfection of his own nature, which finds its perfect expression only in the complete discharge of the law of love. As he enters, therefore, into fuller

[1] *Cf.* Macarius, xxvi. 14, p. 191 f. "*Question.* Is Satan ever quiet, and a man set free from warfare, or has he war as long as he lives? *Answer.* Satan is never quiet from warring. As long as ever a man lives in this world and wears the flesh, he has to war."

comprehension of the content of that law, revises his rule and pursues his endeavour, so he advances towards perfection, knowing no complete rest until he has reached his goal. The world, if it chances to take account of him, may reckon him a saint while he knows himself to be yet very far from righteousness; for he is better able than the world to know the length of the journey that lies before him. Yet it is not as though he is called upon to overtake a will-o'-the-wisp that constantly mocks his efforts, receding as he advances, and dooming him to increasing disappointment. Rather is his progress a victor's march of occupation, in which he possesses himself of the country through which he moves, finding new and richer territories ever awaiting him.

As the years pass, the nature of the asceticism practised by the Christian changes not only in accordance with the increasing revelation of love which is made to him, but also with reference to the changes that are taking place in himself. Bodily powers wane and present less opportunity than hitherto for formidable temptation through the flesh; while on the other hand self-control is now greater than it was and fixed habits have been formed.[1] Yet it is never possible entirely to omit disciplinary asceticism. As the aged ascetic presses on, he finds that there is still need for the careful regulation of the body and the discipline of the mental and spiritual powers, even to the end. Death alone absolves him from the necessity. "Do you not know, sisters," writes St. Teresa, "that the life of a good religious, and of one who wishes to be among the most intimate friends of God, is one long martyrdom?"[2]

The course is certainly strenuous, yet it is very far from being the joyless struggle it may seem to be from the point of view of the onlooker. "Men suppose that we are in torture and in penance great," says Richard Rolle of Hampole; "but we have more joy and more very delight in a day than they have in the world all their life. They see our body: but they see not our heart where our solace is. If they saw

[1] There are, however, alarming exceptions. Cassian, indeed, anticipates an increasing struggle. "The athlete of Christ, as long as he is in the body, is never in want of a victory to be gained in contests; but in proportion as he grows by triumphant successes, so does a severer kind of struggle confront him." *Institutes*, xix. See H. Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, ii. p. 81 f.

[2] *The Way of Perfection*, xii. 2, p. 75.

that, many of them would forsake all that they have, for to follow us." [1] A great Love has awakened an echo in the human heart, and as the Christian advances towards his goal he rejoices with a joy which no man can take away, because by the merits of Christ he has the assurance of triumphant fellowship. The work of sanctification must continue while life lasts, but he is justified in God's sight at every point of his course, even from the beginning. There he learned the rudiments of the law of love; his education goes on until he has been brought to his perfection, always with his own whole-hearted co-operation and sustained effort; but at whatever stage of the process death may come, salvation is assured, and the process will be carried to its issue beyond the grave.

[1] *The Form of Perfect Living*, p. 11 f. *See* also F. von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Phil. of Rel.*, p. 290 f.

CHAPTER VI

THE SACRIFICIAL IDEAL—REPARATION

I

CONTINUANCE in fellowship and progress in righteousness are both subject to the hindrance of a disturbing factor, in the cancelling of which lies the third element of the threefold ascetic ideal. Made aware of responsibility for the introduction of disorder in his environment, troubled by a sense of defilement and rejection, and, again, counting himself liable to suffer the infliction of a deserved penalty, the ascetic is accustomed to practise, in closest relation with his mystical or disciplinary asceticism, a sacrificial asceticism which has for its object the reparation of the evil resulting from his wrong action. Corporately and individually, directly and vicariously, men strive after this object by the renunciation involved in the offering of sacrifice; at a higher level by the substitution of self-abasement, toil, and the renunciation of possessions, in place of the sacrificial surrender of material gifts; and, in the case of the Christian ascetic, by the unique method of self-oblation in fellowship with One who is Himself the sole agent of reparation.

In the early stages of culture private wrongs are usually met by individual revenge, which is approved by the group; and similarly the group recognises, and at a later stage controls, the system of compensation or fines which naturally arises out of the attempt to ward off retribution. Public injury, however—which is held to result from breaches of tabu law, the practice of sorcery, or private magic, and from acts of sacrilege, such as looking at or touching sacred objects—is avenged by the group, acting, as a rule, through representative individuals. According to the nature of the offence the offender may be regarded as one who is so dangerous to the group that he must be removed by death or by expulsion; or he may be conceived as having incurred

a dangerous pollution or contamination of evil, which may yet be removed, or as having provoked the spirits to a dangerous wrathfulness which may yet be appeased.

The sense of defilement is by no means associated only with wrongdoing. On the contrary it may result from many purely non-moral actions and even from natural and unavoidable bodily states.[1] But, from whatever cause it arises, physical uncleanness and an invasion by evil spirits are the two modes in which it is explained, and attempts are usually made to escape from it by direct self-purification and by sacrifice. The sinner who has suffered contamination and thereby become a source of danger to his fellows must be washed in water or in blood; among some peoples such as the Eskimos, certain American Indians, and the Kikuyu and Mkulwe of East Africa, he is required to make confession, which is regarded as a literal ejection of evil from the body; while purificatory fasting and flagellation are widely used in the same circumstances. By degrees it comes about that these practices, which were originally undertaken as purgatives of a material contagion or a demonic presence physically conceived, are regarded as pleasing to supernatural powers because they involve the self-humiliation and hurt of offenders; and they are then offered as sacrifices intended to turn away wrath or even to deprecate hostility before any action likely to be viewed as an offence. Thus among the ancient Mexicans it was customary for sinners to fast in expiation of their own offences, and for the high priest to fast and practise various austerities on behalf of his people when calamities occurred which were accepted as evidence of divine wrath. And in Guiana, "Before attempting to shoot a cataract for the first time, on first sight of any new place, and every time a sculptured rock or striking mountain or stone is seen, Indians avert the ill-will of the spirits of such places by rubbing red-peppers (*capsicum*) each in his or her own eyes." [2]

Pollution, however, is not always to be satisfactorily removed by self-purification. The chief need in such a case, according to primitive man and to many who follow long after him, is a positive accession of holiness and strength,

[1] As, for example, from contact with the dead, with a murderer, or with a stranger, and in sickness, at puberty, and in child-birth.

[2] E. F. Im Thurn, *Indians of Guiana*, p. 368; cited by H. B. Alexander in E.R.E. v. 636.

which will disperse the miasma or drive away the demons; and this is obtained by means of sacrifice. The act of offering, and especially, in the case of animal offerings, the right use of the blood which is shed, re-establishes communion with the spirit-world, and imparts to the offerer, or to those on whose behalf the offering is made, vital energy and spiritual health. The remarkable persistence of this idea is seen in the Jewish sin-offering, which was probably a later form of the older burnt-offering sometimes used as a special act of expiation,[1] and was maintained until the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. "The distinctive characteristic of the sin-offering is the special ritual of the atoning blood. Part of this is placed upon the horns or corner-projections of the altar of burnt-offering, and the remainder is poured out at the base of the altar. When the sin-offering is a bullock slain on behalf of a priest, or for the community, part of the blood is also sprinkled with the hand seven times before the veil of the sanctuary." [2] An entirely different type of expiatory offering based on the same material conception of evil is represented by the Shintoist *aga-mono* (things of ransom), offerings which were cast into the river after the pollution of the sinner had been magically transferred to them.

When the offence is conceived as affecting the rights and authority of supernatural beings, it is necessary for the offender not only to purify himself, but also to appease the powers whom he has angered by his neglect or by insult. This he usually does by offering gifts.[3] Thus "The gods of the Gold Coast are jealous gods, jealous of their dignity, jealous of adulation and offerings paid to them; and there is nothing they resent so much as any slight, whether intentional or accidental, which may be offered them. Such a sin can only be expiated, if at all, by the most abject humiliation, and the most costly sacrifices." [4] Similarly Dr. W. H. R. Rivers tells how among the Todas certain offences must be

[1] See C. F. Burney, *Outlines of O.T. Theology*, p. 61 f.

[2] Ib. p. 62 f.

[3] This may well be as early in its origin as the other type of sacrifice. L. R. Farnell rightly says of Robertson Smith's communion-feast theory, "Modern anthropology disproves that part of it which asserts the gift-sacrifice to be invariably due to a later degeneracy" (E.R.E. xi. 13).

[4] A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of W. Africa*, p. 11.

expiated by the offering of a buffalo. "Giving the buffalo," he says, "is clearly of the nature of a 'sin-offering,' but the offering is only made when the sin has already had evil consequences, and it is made in order to remove these consequences. Its object is atonement for an offence committed. It seemed that a man only had to resort to the advice of the diviners in the case of exceptionally severe misfortunes. The act of giving the buffalo is attended by ceremonial which involves considerable expense to himself and great inconvenience to all the members of his clan." [1]

Propitiation before the event is as common as that which follows upon the supposed declaration of spirit hostility through ill-fortune. It is widely believed, for example, that the inception of a new work or building, or entrance on a new relationship such as marriage, constitutes a provocation to the gods, who must be mollified by an offering: to omit it would be to make certain preparation for evil. Foundation sacrifices and sacrifices in connection with the building of bridges are especially common. When the ground was first broken for the railroad between Beirut and Damascus the blood of ten sheep was poured upon it and their flesh was given to the poor. At the consecration of a public tank near Calcutta an open fire for oblations was kindled on a specially constructed altar. In Saharunpur offerings of sandalwood, rice, flowers, incense, sweetmeats and cakes, are made to an image of Brahm Devata on the night of a wedding, after which the image is buried and the offerings are renewed at intervals until another wedding takes place in the same family. Then the image is dug up and removed, and a new image takes it place.

The degree of renunciation involved in the presentation of gifts naturally varies greatly, according to the strength of the sense of guilt or of the desire to please. In course of time a scale of offerings is usually devised, having regard both to the nature of the offences which require to be expiated and the ability of the offenders. But even so, it is required

[1] *The Todas*, p. 300. On p. 311 the writer adds, "When I was first told about these offerings, I was inclined to regard them in general as punishments and to treat them as if they were social regulations. With further knowledge it seemed clear that they were distinctly of a religious nature, and were really sin offerings designed to propitiate the gods and bring about the removal of misfortunes which had come upon the offenders."

as a rule that what is given shall be the best of its kind. Animal victims must generally be males, old enough to be free from the impurity of birth, but not so old as to admit of any suggestion of their full powers being impaired; and they must be free from any blemish or disease. As with animals so with food offerings generally; only the best may be presented. And gradually the idea grew up that when men made their offerings they were in some sort making a substitutionary gift for their own lives, which were due to God. By the excellence of their gifts they endeavoured to make amends for their unworthiness, offering a perfection which was owed by, but could not be found in, themselves. Thus the Jew laid his hand upon the head of the sacrificial animal, not in order to transfer his guilt and dispose of it by the slaughter of the beast, but in order to symbolise the fact that he, a sinner, sought to dedicate his own life to Yahweh as a perfect offering.

2

The direct offering of material sacrifices to gods and spirits continues at the present time among peoples of the lower culture all over the world, and among more civilised peoples mainly in India and other Asiatic lands.[1] But elsewhere it has almost entirely ceased, its place being taken by many forms of self-chastisement, by the performance of good works, and by acts of devotion.

In Zoroastrianism it would appear that the founder himself put a stop to animal sacrifice, but that it returned after his death, horses, camels, oxen, asses, deer, and birds being regularly offered. Then, with the growth of moral perception, the practice gradually disappeared of itself, and only the slightest trace of it remains to-day in the offering of "three, five, or seven hairs of a white bull (*varasa*), tied together by a metal ring, generally of gold,

[1] In an important letter on the Turkish crisis in the *Times* of Nov. 8, 1922, the Bishop of Gibraltar suggests that "Kemal is deliberately making a breach between Asia and Europe, emphasising the 'Asiaticness' of the Turk, and his contempt for everything European, so that, from the vantage ground of Constantinople, and the prestige of having attained it, he offers himself as a leader to a hostile Asia. It must surely have been in that spirit that, as Refert Pasha passed over the Galata Bridge the other day, the throats of sheep and oxen were cut in sacrifice. It is a resurgence of the old Asiatic spirit, thoroughly alien to anything European."

and placed in a cup and deposited, with other sacrificial objects, on the *takht i alat*, or low stone table, in front of the chief officiating priest." [1] It was the custom until quite recently, however, to kill a goat on the third day after the death of a Parsi and to offer the fat on the following morning. In India the Buddha rejected the practice of sacrifice, and, although Buddhism in its later forms has not everywhere succeeded in overruling the natural desire of men to make offerings in their worship, it has at least restrained them from the sacrificial slaughter of animals.

The Jews offered sacrifice by this means until the year 70 A.D., when the Temple was destroyed and the daily offering ceased. But it is the opinion of all but the Liberals among them that this suspension is only temporary, and that the time will come when sacrifice will again be offered according to the method prescribed in the sacred scriptures. "Divine ordinances cannot be abrogated. They are merely temporarily suspended until the time comes when they can again be enacted. A time will come when a new Jerusalem and a new Temple will be built up again. This conviction lives deep down in the hearts of the Jews, who look forward to the realisation of the divine prophecies and with that the restoration of the ancient worship." [2] Meanwhile the old form of sacrifice is somewhat doubtfully attributed to a few Jewish sects; and it persists among modern European Jews only in the offering of a white cock or hen as a ransom on the eve of the Day of Atonement.[3] Islam started its career free of any obligation in the matter of animal offerings; but it has not been able to exclude the practice entirely. A redemption sacrifice is very commonly made by Muslims on the seventh day after the birth of a male child, and sometimes in the case of a female. It

[1] E. Edwards in E.R.E. xi. 20.

[2] Rabbi M. Gaster in E.R.E. xi. 24.

[3] See *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vii. 435. "As a rule, a cock is taken by a male, and a hen by a female person; and after the recitation of Ps. 107. 17–20 and Job 33. 23–24, the fowl is swung round the head three times while the right hand is put upon the animal's head. At the same time the following is thrice said in Hebrew: 'This be my substitute, my vicarious offering, my atonement. This cock (or hen) shall meet death, but I shall find a long and pleasant life of peace.' After this the animal is slaughtered and given to the poor, or, what is deemed better, is eaten by the owners while the value of it is given to the poor."

is the custom in connection with this 'Aqiqa ceremony to offer one or two he-goats of a year old, and in some places to shave the child's head and to distribute among mendicants the weight of the hair in silver. The prayer used at the time of offering runs thus, according to a book of devotion in use among Indian Muslims: "O God, this is the 'Aqiqa sacrifice of my son so-and-so; its blood for his blood, its flesh for his flesh, its bone for his bone, its skin for his skin, its hair for his hair. O God! make it a redemption for my son from the Fire, for truly I have turned my face to Him who created the heavens and the earth, a true believer." [1] Muslims who are making the annual pilgrimage offer sacrifice at Mecca on the tenth day of the twelfth month; but, while there is commonly an enormous waste of food at this time as a result of the large number of sacrificial victims, the purpose is not so much expiatory as commemorative, the pilgrims having in remembrance the substitution of a ram when Abraham was about to offer up his son. Since, however, the offering is accounted a good deed, it is generally considered to have some value as an offset to sin.

While animal sacrifice disappears thus unwillingly, the act of making reparation for sin, however the sin be conceived, is for the most part accomplished by sacrificial self-discipline, which is frequently regarded as possessing a purgative value, by the exercise of charity and other good works, and by the offering of special acts of devotion. Purificatory discipline plays a very large part in the developed religion of Zoroaster, where the rules of the Vendidad in particular serve as a guide to the securing of release from the defilement of actual sin as also from the ceremonial impurity involved in certain physical conditions and through contact, voluntary or involuntary, with unclean things.[2] Fasting is not permitted, but the sinner must deliver himself from his contaminated state, which puts him into the power of the demons, by making confession

[1] See S. M. Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islam*, ch. v.

[2] There is an extraordinary confusion of the trivial and the serious, and an amazing scale of valuation. As Dr. J. H. Moulton says, "We have in the Vendidad passage after passage where sins are catalogued with their appropriate penalties, and we marvel at the triviality of those that get the hardest measure" (*Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 152).

in the presence of a Dastur, or high priest; and he must submit to scourging when it is ordained as necessary. "When he sincerely desires pardon, he must be prepared to undergo any corporal punishment, or to pay any amount as penalty, or to perform any other deeds of righteousness that the Dastur may prescribe." [1] The scale of stripes prescribed in the Vendidad ranges from five up to ten thousand, an extravagance of penalty which can scarcely ever have been actually imposed. It stands, however, as an indication of the extreme heinousness and danger of certain offences, and in later times it secures the payment of money in commutation of part of the lawful measure of punishment.[2]

The work of neutralising the evil that has been done includes sacrificial renunciation and actual toil. In order that worship may be duly offered and righteousness increased thereby, the offender must offer gifts of loads of choice wood for the sacred fire, bundles of twigs (*baresman*) for the use of the officiating priest, and libations of *haoma*. And, so as to counter by direct action the disorder effected by his sin, he must destroy large numbers of noxious or demonic creatures, such as snakes and worms, frogs, ants, and tortoises; or he must pull down the *dakhmas* in which men's bodies have been buried; or he must build bridges and dig irrigation canals.

Hinduism requires that "Penances must always be performed for the sake of purification, because those whose sins have not been expiated are born (again) with disgraceful marks." [3] The methods of expiation are very numerous. They include the recitation of the Vedas, attendance on cows, and drinking the five liquid products of the cow, namely, milk, curds, ghee (clarified butter), urine, and dung; or property must be renounced, the head shaved, the solitary life adopted, the breath suppressed, austerities of many kinds practised, and mutilations accomplished. The binding force of these requirements is strikingly demonstrated by recent happenings in India, reported in the following terms in the *Daily Telegraph* of August 25, 1922. "A pathetic sequel to the Moplah rebellion was to be found in the meeting of Hindu religious

[1] M. N. Dhalla in E.R.E. v. 665 f.
[2] See A. J. Carnoy in E.R.E. x. 492.
[3] *Laws of Manu*, xi. 54.

authorities at Calicut, Zamorin presiding, to consider conditions governing the re-admission to Hinduism of those Hindus who had been forcibly converted to Islam. It was decided that minor penances would suffice, and hence it was prescribed that the men whose scalp and hair-tufts had been cut, and who had repeated the Mohammedan formula of faith, and the women who had been compelled to wear the Moplah jacket, must drink panchagavya (the five liquids from the cow) and repeat the sacred words [1] 3,000 times at the temple on three successive days. Men who were forcibly circumcised and women who were outraged receive a similar penance extending over twelve days, and involving the repetition of the sacred words 12,000 times; while in the case of those who had been compelled to eat Moplah-cooked food, the duration of the penitential period has been fixed at forty-one days, the sacred words to be uttered 12,000 times daily. Stringent rules were laid down to ensure the due performance of these conditions, which are not applicable to Brahmins, who will presumably have to face stiffer requirements. The English magistrate who was courteously invited to the meeting urged the desirability of coming to a speedy decision with regard to the Brahmins' penances."

A favourite Hindu method of doing penance for sins of a serious nature is the performance of a pilgrimage to some holy shrine, where divine favour is believed to be certainly procurable. Preparation for such a pilgrimage is commonly made by abstinence from food and by sexual restraint; a vow of silence during the whole journey is sometimes taken, and signified by the wearing of a silver mouth-lock fastened by a skewer which pierces both cheeks or by tying a handkerchief over the mouth; and not infrequently the travelling is done by the painfully slow process of measuring the length of the body along the ground in a series of prostrations. In like manner Buddhists are to be seen at Lhasa traversing the Circular Road, a distance of about six miles, in expiation of their sins; while in Japan penitents deliberately choose pilgrimages involving stiff hill-climbing, in order to increase the merit of their journey.

Outside the penitential system of Hindu caste regulations

[1] *Narayana* or *Siva*, according to their cult.

stands the *karma-marga* of the sadhus. Each regards himself as a sufferer who is reaping the evil results of a long series of previous lives. His very existence as an individual is a mark of disorder which must be expiated. Not as a means of propitiating gods or spirits, therefore, but in discharge of the impersonal law of *karma*, he strives after self-emancipation from the illusions and suffering of this world, and sets out to cancel the past and compass absorption into the Universal Spirit by the voluntary endurance of every conceivable type of bodily torture. With knife and pointed steel, with fire and water, by the aid of the mid-day sun, by the adoption of abnormal postures, and by the performance of unnatural labours, the sadhus cut and pierce and burn and exhaust and shrivel the body with invincible determination. There is no need to describe in detail the nature and range of the mortifications which are commonly practised by them, for these have already been sufficiently indicated.[1] But they are such as to furnish strong testimony to the sincerity of those who practise them, to create astonishment at the almost incredible powers of endurance possessed by the human body, and to provoke regret that men should be the victims of such costly error.

Each sect has a certain standard of severity which represents its average, as it were, though individual members may exceed it or fall short of it; and it is common to find particular sects characterised by particular practices. Thus the Saivas generally outdo the followers of the mild-natured Vishnu in the degree of pain which they inflict upon themselves; and among them the *Gosains* are specially given to the task of performing difficult pilgrimages, the *Aghoris* achieve notoriety by feeding on carrion, and many of the *Paramahamsas* go naked in all weathers. But even the Vaisnava *Bairagi* sometimes lies on the nailed couch, or "arrowy bed of Bhishna."

Repudiating the Hindu hope of absorption into a Supreme Spirit, yet acknowledging the same necessity for the burning up of the *karma* of the past in the fire of present austerities, Jainists practise the interior penance of confession and reverence, study and meditation, indifference to personal needs, and the charitable relief of the suffering poor; and also the exterior penance of fasting in various degrees,

[1] See p. 13.

of silence and immobility, and of bodily torture.[1] Members of the Jain community are specially remarkable for their abstention from interference with every form of life, in obedience to the doctrine of *ahimsa*. They abstain rigidly from flesh food: they drink only filtered water; they cover the mouth with a veil so that no insect may be drawn in to its death as they breathe; and they sweep the ground before them as they go, so as to avoid crushing insects with their feet. In former times it was not uncommon for a *yati*, after twelve years of strict asceticism, to crown his austerities by starving himself to death: and, while non-religious suicide is regarded with horror by the Jains, such a death is accounted a supreme and glorious act of expiation.[2]

The sacrificial asceticism of the Jews is most clearly seen in connection with the annual Day of Atonement and the nine penitential days which immediately precede it. This season of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, is rigorously observed as a means of effecting reconciliation with God, and of worthily inaugurating the new year by securing the cancellation of all offences committed during the year that is just ended. Fasting, which was so commonly observed among the ancient Jews that it came to be regarded as a characteristic Jewish custom, is practised by very many on each of the appointed days; and on the Day of Atonement itself no food is taken during the twenty-four hours even by the *Yom Kippur* Jew, who disregards all religious observances other than those belonging to this great fast. This fasting is described by the Liberals as "a minor and subsidiary feature," of no great importance; yet it is practised by them, since, as C. G. Montefiore puts it, "It is an old custom, which does no particular harm, and is an exercise in self-control. Judaism perhaps slightly under-estimates the place of asceticism in religion, and therefore it would be a pity to abandon any stimulating ascetic element." By the vast majority of Jews, however,

[1] See Mrs. S. Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 163–8.

[2] *Cf.* the Japanese *harakiri*, of which T. Harada says, "It was not mere suicide. It was an institution, legal and ceremonial, invented in the Middle Ages, by which warriors could expiate their crimes, apologise for error, escape from disgrace, redeem their friends, or prove their sincerity" (*The Faith of Japan*, New York, 1914, p. 129; quoted in E.R.E. xii. 36).

the fasting is accounted of first importance, and is conceived as having both purificatory and propitiatory value.[1]

Scarcely anything is to be found of the practice of self-chastisement, which was never more than an individual eccentricity among the Jews. But it is considered a pious custom by some to submit to a more or less symbolical scourging by receiving forty stripes save one on the eve of the Day of Atonement. The attendant of the synagogue lays on with thongs made of calf-skin, reciting three times Psalm lxxviii. 38 (thirteen words in the Hebrew), a word at each stroke, while the penitent lies prostrate, silently confessing his sins.

Deeds of charity are performed as a substitute, equivalent or nearly equivalent, for sacrifice all the year round, but especially on the Day of Atonement, when offerings are made to individuals and to charitable institutions and societies in direct association with the thought of remission of sin. And "even the souls of the dead are included in the community of those pardoned on the Day of Atonement. It is customary for children to have public mention made in the Synagogue on behalf of their departed parents, and to make charitable gifts on behalf of their souls. But no amount of charity will avail the soul of a wicked man."[2]

Synagogue services are continuous throughout the day practically everywhere, and are characterised by repeated confessions of sin; while a detailed description of the Temple services that were performed by the high-priest on the Day of Atonement constitutes the central part of the *musaf* service, and is accompanied by a prayer for their re-establishment. "Lead us with exultation unto Zion thy city, and unto Jerusalem the place of the sanctuary with everlasting joy; and there we will prepare before thee the offerings that are obligatory for us, the continual offerings according to their order, and the additional offerings

[1] Its connection with the actual offering of sacrifice is clearly brought out by Rabbi Simeon (*Berakot*, 33a), when he says, "Therefore, O Lord! with thy abundant mercy answer me at this time and hour and let the diminution of my fat and blood, which hath by this day's fast been diminished, be accounted and favourably accepted before thee as the fat of the sacrifice laid on thine altar; that it may atone for what I have sinned, trespassed and transgressed against thee, whether accidentally or by choice; through ignorance or presumption; knowingly or unknowingly."

[2] *Jewish Encyclopædia*, ii. 288.

according to their enactment: and the additional offerings of the day of Atonement we will prepare and offer unto thee in love according to the precept of thy will, as thou hast prescribed for us in thy Law through the hand of Moses thy servant, by the mouth of thy glory." [1] Throughout the year use is made of the practice of reciting portions of the Law in lieu of offering sacrifice, and the study of the Law is also held to serve the same end, special merit attaching to the study of those portions which relate to the sacrifices.

The same three methods of making reparation for sin, namely, fasting and self-chastisement, charity, and worship, are in use among Muhammadans; and, as Dr. Margoliouth points out, the tendency with them has been to ascribe an atoning value to these acts whenever they are undertaken, though often they were originally practised as religious duties having no direct connection with remission of sin. "If offences can be atoned by charity or fasting, it is clear that these acts must possess positive value; otherwise they could not serve as makeweights against such negative quantities as sins. And there is a tendency to extend the theory of atonement to all religious observances; since God does nothing in vain, the purpose of these performances must be to atone for acts committed willingly or unwillingly which have incurred God's displeasure. The first line wherein asceticism can develop is, then, that of supererogation: doing what the Koran prescribes to a more liberal extent than it actually enjoins. And so far as Islamic asceticism is expressed in practice, it regularly adopts this method. It wins merit by excessive performance of those acts which on the authority of the Koran are known to win it." [2]

Penitential fasting has the authority of the prophet himself, and is much practised. The Qur'an recommends to him "who finds nothing to offer" [3] a three days' fast on the pilgrimage and a seven days' fast on returning; the four weeks' fast of Ramadan is obligatory for all except the sick and infirm, travellers, idiots, and young children, for it is believed that by this fast pardon for all venial sins is

[1] *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire*, trans. by S. Singer, 8th ed., 1908, p. 265.

[2] *The Early Development of Mohammedanism*, p. 146.

[3] II. 190.

won; and strict Muslims, desiring to go beyond what is actually imposed, fast in addition every Monday and Thursday throughout the year. The Muslim who kills a believer and cannot find the required blood-money must fast for two months as a penance; while he who breaks his oath, and cannot perform the prescribed penance of feeding ten poor men, must fast for three days in lieu thereof.

The infliction of bodily pain for the achievement of expiation is not uncommon, and is to be traced back to the very beginning of the history of Islam.[1] Contemporaries of the prophet are recorded to have lived out on the mountains near Medina, wearing chains and hair-shirt, bewailing their sins; or they fastened themselves to a pillar in the mosque, or knocked their heads against the wall of their chamber until the blood came, or scourged themselves severely with rods. At the present day pilgrims to Mecca sometimes travel on foot without shoes on their feet, and at the end of their journey they allow themselves to be led round the Ka'ba like camels by means of a ring in the nose.

Muslims consider that almsgiving ranks next in importance to prayer, and that it is to be accounted a part of worship. For that reason the *zakat*, or legal alms, must not be given to any one other than a Muslim, but must be bestowed upon the poor, the needy, the orphan, the stranger, the slave, and the prisoner, who are numbered among the faithful. Voluntary almsgiving over and above the legal requirement is held to be meritorious, and efficacious in cancelling sin: and there is a recognised system of compensation for the discharge of guilt in connection with certain offences.

Prayer is the very corner-stone of practical religion, and the five daily *salawat* have been consistently regarded as the minimum performance required of all Muslims, to which those who are eager to acquire merit for the forgiveness of sins must make considerable additions. Thus a genuine asceticism of worship, involving considerable expenditure of time and physical energy, as well as spiritual striving, has been found in Islam at all times. The early Muslim ascetics zealously offered litanies and other devotional exercises, including the reading of the Qur'an, the recitation of the names of God, and the repetition of certain formulæ

[1] See I. Goldziher, *De l'Ascétisme aux premiers temps de l'Islam*, in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, xxxvii. 314 ff.

and invocations. It is recorded of Aurangzib that he was accustomed to spend whole nights in prayer at the mosque, and that even in battle he would dismount and recite the prayers at the appointed times. And the practice of modern Muslims is indicated by the fact that they speak of their daily prayers as being of four different kinds, namely, *fard*, *sunnat*, *witr*, and *nafl*. The first are the prayers which are definitely enjoined; the second includes the prayers which are added to these because it is believed that the prophet was wont so to add them; the third consists of an odd number of extra prayers, three, five, or seven, to be said between the last prayers of one day and the first prayers of the following day, on the strength of a tradition which asserts that "God is odd; He loves the odd"; and the fourth kind are altogether voluntary and supererogatory, and, therefore, still more meritorious than the rest. Of these last a tradition says, "He who, for the sake of faith and with a good intention, in Ramadan makes these *nafl* or voluntary prayers, will receive all the pardon of his former sins." [1]

3

The sacrificial system, and the later substitutes of self-humiliation and chastisement, acts of charity, and devotional exercise, pass over into the Christian way of reparation, which, while it retains the essential ideas of earlier practice, is yet separated from it by an absolute difference in their application. It is the faith of Christians that Jesus Christ "vindicates the divine character by a great act of moral reparation, made in man's name and on man's behalf, to the divine holiness which our sins have ignored and outraged. This great act of reparation is consummated in the blood-shedding of Christ. The sacrifice of consummate obedience is carried to its extreme point and accepted in its perfection. God in Christ receives from man, and that publicly, a perfect reparation: an acknowledgment without fault or drawback: a perfect sacrifice. Now God can forgive the sins of men freely and without moral risk, if they come to Him in the name of Christ." [2] In order to avail themselves of the divine forgiveness it is necessary that they should be sacramentally and mystically associated

[1] *Sahibu'l-Bukhari*, i. 4.
[2] C. Gore, *The Epis. to the Ephesians*, p. 61.

with Him by baptism into the holy Name, whereby they are delivered from the defilement of sin, racial and individual, and initiated into the path of progressive assimilation to the character of the Perfect Man.

Progress along this path is assisted by a further sacrament of renewal and strengthening, resting once more on the merit of the death of Christ. Christ made to the Father the perfect surrender of a perfect life, so that men might make their imperfect surrender of their sadly imperfect lives in union with His offering, and constantly find acceptance with God for His sake, because their fellowship with Him serves as a pledge of the perfection unto which they will grow. He who made " by his one oblation of himself, once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world," that is, for man's refusal and failure to dedicate himself wholly to God's service, instituted, and in His holy Gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memorial of that His precious death until His coming again ; so that in it we might offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, in Him, " to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice." Therefore in this sacred memorial the Christian ever pledges himself anew to a life of sacrificial asceticism, offering himself unreservedly in conjunction with and, as it were, under the merciful covering of the sacrifice of Christ, finding acceptance with God through the mediation of His Son, and receiving through the sacramental Body and Blood the spiritual power requisite for faithful perseverance in the sacrificial life.

But, however steady and continuous his progress, experience shows that lapses are unavoidable ; and when the Christian falls into sin he becomes responsible to the community of which he is a member. From the beginning the Church was accustomed to deal with its offending members as a Body charged with responsibility for their oversight and direction and empowered with authority to discipline and, if need arose, to exclude. Post-baptismal sin provided a practical problem which was dealt with in earliest days on the lines of disciplinary regulation publicly enforced and innocent of any theory other than the recognition of the Church as the Spirit-filled Body of Christ. In course of the early development of the disciplinary system the full range of sin came to be noted, private confession

was substituted for public avowal of offence, and, while rigorism and laxity both appeared in various parts of the Church at different times, the general tendency was to recognise the necessity for patience in dealing with penitents, to devise extended scales of public penance, and to grade penitents accordingly. Restoration to the Fellowship was the end in view, and authoritative discipline was the method. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; the use of sackcloth and ashes; continence; pilgrimages; and all the familiar ascetic practices were pressed into use, varying, according to the nature of the offences for which they were prescribed, from trivial burdens to serious disabilities. "A remarkable accompaniment of penitential discipline in the West was the imposition upon penitents, even when reconciled, of grave disabilities extending over the whole term of life. These are first prominently mentioned in a letter of Siricius, bishop of Rome from A.D. 384 to A.D. 398. No person who has been a penitent may marry; and if already married he may not resume the cohabitation of marriage. No such person may undertake military service; or engage in trade; or attend the games of the circus." [1]

The mediæval period saw great changes both in practice and theory. Compilations known as Penitentials began to be generally used in the 7th century as guides to confessors who not only heard confessions privately but administered private penance: there was a gradual hardening of a necessary and wholly salutary exercise of spiritual authority and dispensation into the largely mechanical business of providing for the discharge of the consequences of carefully scheduled and duly assessed acts of sin: and as a result of the teaching that the temporal punishment of sins for which no penance is performed on earth remains to be endured in Purgatory after death, penance was undertaken as an advantageous anticipation of the pains of that place of purification.[2] Not only were doctrines of grace and of merit applied in this connection, but special advantages were offered to penitents who could afford to redeem their penance by some form of commutation such as building a

[1] O. D. Watkins, *A Hist. of Penance*, i. 482.

[2] This remains the belief of the Roman Church to-day. "All 'unpaid debts' will be fully discharged in the life hereafter in the purifying flames of purgatory" (E. L. van Becelaere, in E.R.E. ix. 715).

bridge or equipping a soldier for the crusades. Further it resulted that natural hardships and trying conditions which come in the course of response to vocation also came to be regarded as penance which will reduce the sufferings of Purgatory, a belief which caused St. Francis Xavier to write from India in 1544 to Francisco Mansillas, "Pray God that He may give you plenty of patience to deal with your people; and reckon that you are in Purgatory purging your sins, and that God does you a great favour in purging your sins here in this life." [1]

Here is a serious and, in many respects, evil departure from the disciplinary penance of the early Church. And yet it cannot be said to be fundamentally unwarranted and erroneous, though the spirit in which it was applied was largely wrong. The distinction between temporal punishment and eternal loss may easily be pressed to the point of presumptuous definition and assessment: but to reject it entirely is wilfully to refuse to face the evidence of the operation of natural law, so-called, in the imposition of some of the consequences of sin, and it is to make of the atoning work of Christ an operation suspiciously akin to magic rather than supremely moral. The twofold rite of initiation into the Church of Christ, the washing and the laying on of hands, marks a spiritual crisis in the life which may not be repeated. It unites the Christian with his Redeemer, it invests him with a responsible priesthood, it imposes upon him the obligation of suffering, and it requires him, not to pay the price of sin, for that he cannot do, but willingly to bear in fellowship with Christ some of the least of the consequences of sin. As Newman has said, "The promises of forgiveness of sin have as full an application after Baptism as before, but not in the same free instantaneous way. They are regained gradually, with fear and trembling—by repentance, prayer, deprecation, penance, patience." [2]

It is futile, and it encourages an intolerable spirit of commercialism, to attempt to grade sins in minute detail and to attach to each its due equivalent of penance: [3] it is

[1] E. A. Stewart, *The Life of St. Francis Xavier*, p. 192.

[2] From a letter to an unknown correspondent. *Correspondence of John Henry Newman*, 1839–1845, p. 207.

[3] *Cf.* Jeremy Taylor, *Unum Necessarium*, ix. 6, 73 (p. 646). "We need not immerge ourselves in the trifling controversies of our

an utter perversion of the Christian temper to discharge penance as a means of forestalling the labours and sorrows of an intermediate state: but it is wholly Christian to recognise that sin is an outrage, that its consequences are costly, and that the least the sinner can do is to show that he is of the spirit of Christ and would fain make what reparation he can accomplish. Walter Hilton, never an advocate of unnecessary and presumptuous suffering, rightly says of God and of the sinful soul that "He requireth not great doing of Penance, nor painful suffering in the flesh, before He forgiveth it. But He requireth a loathing of sin, and a full forsaking in the will for love of Him, and a turning of the heart to Him. This He asketh, for this He giveth. And then when He seeth this, without any further delay He forgiveth the sin, and reformeth the soul to His likeness. The sin is forgiven, that the soul shall not be damned; nevertheless, the pain due to the sin is not yet fully forgiven, unless that contrition and love be the greater. And therefore shall he go and show himself, and make his confession to his ghostly Father, and receive the Penance which he enjoineth him for his trespass, and perform it gladly, so that both the sin and the punishment may be done away before he pass hence." [1] Only so may he be truly purged of his offence and recover his sense of satisfied regard for the justice of the righteous God: [2] and the

later Schools, about the just value of every work, and how much every penance weighs, and whether God is so satisfied with our penal works, that in justice he must take off so much as we put on, and is tied also to take our accounts. Certain it is, if God should weigh our sins with the same value as we weigh our own good works, all our actions and sufferings would be found infinitely too light in the balance. Therefore it were better that we should doe what we can, and humbly begge of God to weigh them both with vast allowances of mercy. All that we can doe, is to be sorrowful for our sins, and to leave them, and to endeavour to obey God in the time to follow; and to take care, *ut aliquo actu administretur pœnitentia*, that our repentance be exercised with certain acts proper to it."

[1] *The Scale of Perfection*, Bk. II., Part I. v., p. 145 f.

[2] The sense of justice plays an important part in this asceticism. This is well illustrated by Dom Paul Delatte's comment on the Benedictine rule (XLV.) that one who makes a mistake in choir must offer satisfaction, the intention being probably that he should kneel or prostrate himself in his place in the presence of the others. He says, "It is not necessary that our fault should have caused appreciable disturbance or discord, nor even that our neighbours should have noticed it. It is not a question of æsthetics, but of religious

prompting to such action is so persistent that it may lead to the performance of penance long years after the commission of an offence. Thus it is recorded of St. Francis Xavier that "Successful of old in students' races, to penance himself for vanity in his speed of foot he had girt about his legs with cords, with the result that the swollen flesh closed over the bands." [1] And the same spirit is witnessed in less questionable operation in the picture of Dr. Johnson standing bareheaded in the market-place at Lichfield in order to express contrition for his refusal to assist his father in the same spot long before.

The desire to give proof of a penitent heart is never far away in the performance of such asceticism of reparation. Appreciating the nature and consequences of his sin, the Christian is driven to seek an outlet for his sorrow in some measure of practical asceticism, and his sense of gratitude to God who blots out his iniquity is such as to suggest the need for some token of the genuineness of his repentance. He would not exhaust his sorrow in vain regrets and pious aspirations, and he dare not accept God's forgiveness lightly as a benefit lightly bestowed. He therefore undertakes some voluntary act of sacrifice related both to the offence and to his determination of future freedom from such offence.

At the Reformation Protestant reaction made a clean sweep of the whole trafficking system of penance and of the doctrines supporting it, with exceedingly evil results. "O Lord," writes Hooker,[2] "what heaps of grievous transgressions have we committed, the best, the perfectest, the most righteous amongst us all, and yet clean pass them over unsorrowed for and unrepented of, only because the Church hath forgotten utterly how to bestow her wonted times of discipline, wherein the public example of all was unto every particular person a most effectual mean to put them often in mind, and even in a manner to draw them to that which now we all quite and clean forget, as if penitency were no part of a Christian man's duty." To this day Protestant

justice. Imperfection has appeared where there should be full and continuous perfection, so that we have a real debt to pay to the Majesty of God. . . . Our penances should be done spontaneously, generously, with zealous faith and love." *The Rule of St. Benedict*, p. 297.

[1] F. Thompson, *St. Ignatius Loyola*, p. 99.

[2] *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, v. 72, 13.

Christianity has refused to practise any asceticism of reparation other than that of compensation to those against whom offences have been committed. Catholic Christianity, on the other hand, continues to believe that by an act of sin a Christian places himself under obligation to God and to the Church, and that the Church is required to demand of him, in the name of Christ, for the honour of God and for the welfare of his own soul, such reparation as is fitting. For by his sin he has failed in the continued presentation of his already dedicated life; he has thereby incurred a penalty to be borne; and he has made it necessary that he should give unmistakable expression to his grief for his wrongdoing and to his emphatic rejection of the spirit in which it was accomplished.

Another mediæval perversion of the Christian doctrine and practice of penance not wholly without truth remains to be noted. Reversion to the pagan conception of appeasing the wrath of God by a public display of suffering was no doubt responsible, in part at least, for the appearance of the Flagellants who, after the havoc wrought by the Black Death, journeyed through town and country scourging themselves with whips and reciting the penitential psalms. Between the years 1850 and 1890 the same mistaken form of penance was repeated among the Spaniards of New Mexico and Colorado by a society known as Los Hermanos Penitentes,[1] hundreds of whom used to march in procession, stripped to the waist in readiness for the scourging which was performed at halting-places, and dragging along with them heavy crosses. The single truth to be found in the thoughts of such fanatical ascetics is one that has played a large part in Christian sacrificial asceticism, the truth, namely, that

[1] See A. M. Espinosa's account in *The Cath. Encyc.*, s.v. "Penitentes." It is just possible that in both cases there was some thought of moving onlookers to penitence. St. Alphonsus de' Liguori used this method during a mission at Amalfi in 1756. "Alphonsus knew that penance would have more effect than eloquence on the people of a town burdened by self-indulgence. He and his companions therefore began to do penance from the very day of their arrival. Canon Casanova, an eye-witness, gives us some instances. 'The servant of God and his companions,' he says, 'practised great mortification while the mission lasted, so that they might preach by example rather than by words.' . . . 'I have with my own eyes seen him scouring his shoulders with a thick cord in the pulpit before all the people.' "—A. Berthe, *Life of St. Alphonsus de'Liguori*, i. 519 f.

suffering may avail on behalf of the sins of others. This is a necessary deduction from the doctrine of the unity of the Body of Christ as well as a conviction born of experience.

Dr. A. O'Rahilly states the position thus clearly, "Chosen souls are specially privileged to share in this redemptive work and to fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ. And indeed not only privileged souls but all Christians are invited by the Church to add their prayers and penances to the sufferings of our Redeemer for the conversion of sinners, to unite in loving adoration and thus atone for outrage and sin. The devotion of the Forty Hours, instituted by Clement VIII in 1592, the cult of the Sacred Heart, the founding of special religious congregations (the Congregations of the *Adoration Réparatrice* the Society of the *Filles du Cœur de Jésus*) and sodalities, the lives of the more recent saints and servants of God, all bear witness to the prominence of the idea of reparation in the Church to-day. If this co-operation were regarded as injuring the mediation of Christ, Luther would have been right against the Council of Trent, and works would not count for justification. If the expiation of the just, quickened by our Saviour's merits, cannot be offered for the sinner, the Communion of Saints is not a reality. And it is only by thus entering into this mystic communion and as it were 'pooling' our sufferings and prayers, that we can escape from narrow individualism and depressing isolation." [1]

So we find St. Bernard picturing St. Malachy of Armagh when, as Bishop of Connor, he found that "he had been sent not to men but to beasts," as "admonishing in public, arguing in secret, weeping with one and another; accosting men now roughly, now gently, according as he saw it to be expedient

[1] *Father William Doyle, S.J.*, p. 134 f. *Cf.* E. Herman, *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 183 f. The great mediæval ascetics "suffered, not to gain salvation for their own souls, but with Christ; and with Christ for the Church and for the world. The suggestion that to attempt to share the atoning sufferings of Christ was to belittle His work for us would have evoked a blank stare of bewilderment from them. As well suggest that to pray for others is to belittle the intercession of the eternal High Priest. They believed that we are members of Christ's Body, and that therefore He cannot make His saving oblation of Himself without us. And so they offered themselves, as they understood it in their day, in union with the Crucified."

for each. And in cases where these expedients failed he offered for them a broken and a contrite heart. How often did he spend entire nights in vigil, holding out his hands in prayer!" [1]

To intercessory prayer St. Catherine of Siena added inexpressible sorrow and torture of body as an offering for sin. "How could I be content, Lord," she prayed, "if any one of those who have been created in Thy image and likeness, even as I, should perish and be taken out of my hands? I would not in any wise that even one should be lost of my brethren who are bound to me by nature and by grace; I am fain that the old enemy should lose them all, and Thou gain them, to the greater praise and glory of Thy Name. Better were it for me that all should be saved, and I alone (saving ever Thy charity) should sustain the pains of Hell, than that I should be in Paradise and all they perish damned; for greater honour and glory of Thy name would it be." [2] At another time her prayer was, "Lord, give me all the pains and all the infirmities that there are in the world, to bear in my body; I am fain to offer Thee my body in sacrifice, and to bear all for the world's sins, that Thou mayest spare it and change its life to another." [3] Towards the end of her life she yielded herself exclusively to this office, believing that "in some special sense she was to share in the Passion of Christ, and offer herself a sacrifice for the sins of Holy Church. Now this conception deepened till it became all-absorbing. In full consciousness of failing vital powers, in expectation of her approaching death, she offered her sufferings of mind and body as an expiation for the sins around her. By word of mouth and by letters of heart-broken intensity she summoned all dear to her to join in this holy offering. . . . The evils of the time, and above all of the Church, had generated a sense of unbearable sin in her pure spirit; her constant instinct to identify herself with the guilt of others found in this final offering an august climax and fulfilment."[4]

Near to her in time St. Lydwine of Schiedam yielded herself with equal devotion. "She made expiation, even

[1] H. J. Lawlor, *St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Life of St. Malachy of Armagh*, p. 38.
[2] E. G. Gardner, *St. Catherine of Siena*, p. 14.
[3] Ib. p. 15.
[4] V. Scudder, *St. Catherine of Siena as seen in Her Letters*, p. 14.

as the other saints of her age, for the souls in Purgatory, for the abomination of the schism, for the debauchery of the clergy and the monks, for the wickedness of the peoples and the kings; but in addition to that obligation which she accepted of repairing the sins committed from one end of the Universe to the other, she had also the office laid upon her of being the scapegoat of her own county." [1]

Sainte Chantal, who died in 1641, confessed to Angelique Arnauld, "The distresses and temptations that others describe to me become my own"; and her biographer is constrained to say of her that, "If indeed it is ever given to the members of Christ's Body to share in the least degree in the work of His sinless Penitence, that, surely, was the sacred task in which Sainte Chantal's closing years were occupied." [2]

As a last example witness the asceticism of the revered Father Benson, in whom the true spirit of the Oxford Movement burned to the end of his days. It is recorded of him that, "In Holy Week, while taking all the preaching, including the Three Hours on Good Friday, he used to abstain from all food whatever from the evening of Maundy Thursday to 1 p.m. on Easter Day. I am speaking of the time when I was living continuously with him; and I learn to my astonishment that, so far as the strict fast was concerned, he carried on the practice to the very last Holy Week that he spent on earth. And even after he was ninety years old, on the day of intercession for the War last August, and again on January 2nd this year, the day preceding the national day of Intercession, he refused all food during the day, taking nothing at all during the first of these days, and on the second taking only a slight refection shortly before he went to bed." [3]

All this is very far removed from the conception of Christian practice which many hold: but given the twin truths of the unity of the Fellowship and the steady assimilation of the individual Christian to the human perfection of Christ, how can it be honestly regarded as other than a plain token of the progressive operation of the Holy Spirit in souls which have yielded themselves utterly to the Divine purpose?

[1] J. K. Huysmans, *Sainte Lydwine de Schiedam*, quoted by E. G. Gardner,

[2] E. K. Sanders, *Sainte Chantal*, 1572–1641, p. 290.

[3] *Letters of Richard Meux Benson*, p. 352 f.

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIAN ASCETICISM AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

I

AS a result of great increases of population and a steady growth of democratic power, of amazing scientific progress also, which has made possible unceasing industrial development and vastly improved means of communication, and, again, of the unprecedented strain of the War and its after effects, the world has plainly reached a critical stage in the course of its social and economic development. It is undoubtedly possible to find historical parallels to certain aspects of the present situation, but it remains unique in its range and intensity, in its simultaneity in so many lands, and in the fact that it is for the first time universally aware of itself, and claiming the anxious attention not only of statesmen and other authorities but of the masses of the people.

Socially there is a strongly accentuated conflict of classes, and a measure of antagonism between the sexes, often exaggerated yet truly existent. Authority is everywhere exposed to an unusual degree of contradiction; democracy is the loudly proclaimed watchword of the age; and the spirit of revolution is dangerously prevalent even in countries which have hitherto enjoyed a special reputation for stability. The economic situation is characterised by an organised war on capitalism, which is credited with responsibility for most of the existing evils; the attack is countered with vigour; and we are constantly warned that the struggle is conducting our civilisation to the verge of ruin.

The Church is well aware of these things, and looks on with a profound concern and a full sense of responsibility. The increase of social righteousness is realised as an integral

part of its work of preparation for the coming of the Kingdom. The existing situation is felt to be a direct challenge which it dares not refuse. Yet it is conscious of weakness, and is obviously dissatisfied and uneasy about its position. It conducts official investigations and publishes valuable reports, but does not succeed in persuading the people most concerned to make use of them. It feels that it has somehow become practically a negligible factor in matters in which it ought to count for much; and it is more or less vaguely aware in its different constituent parts that this is due to the divided voice with which it speaks, and to the general impression it conveys of lack of real earnestness. Lukewarmness and compromise and formalism have resulted in the paradox that, while men who are devoted to the cause of social progress are generally prepared to admit that Christianity has much which commends it to them, they are not prepared to say the same of the Church.

Here and there a voice is heard pleading for a revival of discipline and austerity in the Church; and there are some indications that this is becoming increasingly recognised as the one way by which it can deliver itself from its present ineffectiveness. As far back as 1868 Dr. Westcott, reading the signs of the times with prophetic insight, pleaded at Harrow for the recovery of the ascetic life. He indicated the nature of the great victories that were won by ascetics in the past, taking St. Antony as the type of personal asceticism, St. Benedict as the founder of the common life of equality and brotherhood, and St. Francis of Assisi as one who, "in the midst of a Church endowed with all that art and learning and wealth and power could give, re-asserted the love of God to the poorest, the meanest, the most repulsive of His children, and placed again the simple Cross above all the treasures of the world." He declared his conviction that God has new blessings in store for those who will practise "absolute self-sacrifice"; and the Church will do well to test that conviction. There can be no doubt at all that a revival of asceticism would give it renewed confidence, a consciousness of power, and a force of appeal far exceeding that which it now possesses. A cheap gospel is doomed to ineffectiveness: a cause which makes serious demands on those to whom it is presented wins worthy adherents. But not only would the Church itself be greatly benefited by such a revival. Society would

receive from the Church as a result assistance of the greatest practical value in the work of solving its outstanding problems.

This claim will be contested by many who stand outside organised Christianity and by not a few of the Church's practising members; by some it will be dismissed as altogether irrelevant. These last will urge that the Christian ascetic has so far been rightly represented as seeking perfect fellowship with God, the perfect realisation of the life of righteousness, and the perfect dedication of himself soul and body, to his Lord and Saviour. They will claim that, in striving to accomplish these things as a member of the Christian Fellowship, (apart from which it is not possible that he should ever truly know the inspiration of the ideal, or, having known it, that he should be enabled to accomplish it), he is not only fulfilling his individual desire and perfecting his personality, but he is also forwarding the aim of the Fellowship, which is the consummation of the Kingdom of God, and that nothing else matters. To these it must be answered that their conception of the Kingdom of God is an imperfect one; and, further, that while social utility is not the ultimate and perfect test, it is one that must be reckoned with, especially to-day.

These are times of widespread zeal for social improvement and industrial re-organisation, and any recommendation of asceticism which omitted to show that the ascetic has a practical contribution to offer in these matters would certainly be widely rejected even though on other grounds it escaped the condemnation of theologians and ethical teachers. Even in India, where for ages past the ascetic has been consistently regarded with reverence, there are signs of a rising demand that he shall justify his further existence by becoming socially profitable. Dr. Farquhar declares that "The whole monastic movement of modern India is already in full decay. Sadhus stand nearer the popular faith than the ancient orders did, but they cannot be said to wield great influence. . . . Hindus are forward to confess that most of the ascetics of to-day are of little worth."[1] And he proceeds to quote from *The Bengalee* of October 13, 1904, in order to show how the educated Hindu regards the modern sadhu. "It has occurred to

[1] *The Crown of Hinduism*, p. 273.

Mr. Tahl Ram Gangaram that instead of allowing thousands of able-bodied men to grow up and die in mendicancy, an effort should be made to give them some kind of education so as to make them useful members of society. Being unmarried and utterly free from all cares and anxieties, they may, for instance, be usefully employed as itinerant preachers of religion and morality or as medical missionaries whose services will be available whenever and wherever there may be a serious outbreak of epidemics." Similarly MM. Depont and Coppolani, in their valuable work dealing with the Darwish Orders, draw attention to the evil economic results of the *zawiyah* system in Algeria, which are at least as injurious as the more familiar political propaganda undertaken by many of these Orders.[1] As to Christianity there are many who believe that the Church is not at all concerned about the social and economic conditions of the existing order, but that, on the contrary, as it offers its constant prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," it has its eyes fixed upon a Kingdom that is not of this world: and they regard the ascetic, who is generally thought of as a monk, as one who makes a special contribution to the general indifference which is characteristic of the Church.

If it is false and injurious to accept this criticism as true, and to answer that the Kingdom of God is not concerned with eating and drinking, it is also dangerously mistaken to welcome the critic unreservedly as a friend and to endeavour to persuade the Church to a vehemence of practical action in the direction indicated by him. Its energies would thereby become entirely absorbed in work which, however good and necessary it may be, is not specially entrusted to it. The direction of the evolution of human society by the unfailing proclamation of the spiritual ideals of man's nature, by the spiritual regeneration of individuals in an unceasing missionary campaign, and by the increasing edification of its own members, is the Church's

[1] P. 279. "La zouïa où, autrefois, le vieux soufi épuisait son corps en des macérations austères et où le malheureux trouvait un gîte et une table, est, le plus souvent, transformée en une sorte de maison de banque où l'on perçoit l'argent du riche et du pauvre en échange de diplômes, de chapelets, de talismans et de prières; les moqqadim des confréries locales s'enrichissent aux dépens de leurs adeptes; ceux qui ont leurs maîtrises à l'étranger, y envoient une partie de leurs revenus: d'où, appauvrissement de la masse au profit d'une caste et diminution de la richesse publique."

divinely appointed task: and it would gravely prejudice the true development of the social organism if the Church abandoned its primary duty and transformed itself into a society for promoting general prosperity. Historical inquiry will show, nevertheless, that the most intensive phases of its quest of the Kingdom of God by the practice of asceticism have witnessed its entry into closest relations with existing social problems and have resulted in the exercise of its strongest influence on the course of social development. For true social progress can never be effected solely by programmes of reform, organised demand, and legislative action. High wages and abundant leisure, good housing and improved sanitation, are not able of themselves to guarantee progress or even to check deterioration. It is of far greater importance that people should be clean and sober in their habits, and thrifty in their use of time and money, and that all the relationships of the members of a community should be inspired by love rather than controlled by principles of legal justice and economic equality: and these things are most surely promoted by the presence of earnest Christians living ascetically in the midst of society under various types of organisation.

In the course of the Church's history men have practised asceticism as hermits; or as members of a specialised society living apart; or in a society called out from the general society in order to live again in its midst and to minister to it; or in a society which is essentially a part of the general society, but viewed under a special aspect. The hermit was not without his influence on social progress,[1] but it is hardly likely that he will be found again in modern civilisation, except in very rare cases. The remaining three types exhaust the possibilities in respect of the relation

[1] *Cf.* W. R. Inge, *Studies of English Mystics*, p. 39. Speaking of the hermits of the Early Church, he says, "This movement, one of the most difficult in history for moderns to comprehend, was on its saner side a great purity crusade, combined with a desire to cultivate to the utmost the spiritual life by sacrificing all else to it. To call the hermits selfish is a mistake. There is room for this kind of specialisation as well as for others. If the hermits "produced" nothing, in the economic sense, they consumed next to nothing; and even those who are most sceptical about the value of intercessory prayer may admit that the true saint, who can bring his example and influence to bear on the social life of his generation, is a useful member of the community."

of corporate asceticism to general social development, and must be regarded as persistent forms to be reckoned with, not only historically, but for present and future use.

Monachism, the first of these, is an attempt to realise the ideal under artificial conditions. It constitutes special societies in which men may practise a particular type of ascetic life, free from the hindrance of any who are unsympathetic or not duly qualified and called. It represents in effect a social Utopia, a practical attempt to realise a vision such as some have been inspired to set forth in a picture of an ideal commonwealth. The conditions are artificial, since the members of these communities are dependent upon the coexistence of an outer society, different from themselves, for protection and for the supply of postulants, if for no other matter. Crusades of service, the second type, are deliberately missionary. Instead of withdrawal from the world in order to be free to live ideally and to influence society only by their presentation of ideals, they represent corporate efforts to succour society in its weakest and most debased elements, and to reform it by direct action. The crusade is not enterprised as a superior way of life which may in time be imposed upon society generally, but as a special form of service for those who are specially called to it. Puritanism, Catholic and Protestant, represents the only remaining way of asceticism, which is neither withdrawal from men nor ministration to them, but participation in their way of life on an ascetic basis. It is an attempt to make religion cover ordinary life. In practice it is carried out by only a section of society, but theoretically it is for all, and it differs from the other two types in that it is practically possible for all.

When a revival of asceticism comes, monachism, crusades of service, and puritanism in the ordinary life of citizenship will no doubt all be developed: but the special dangers attaching to each must be met with the knowledge gained by past experience, and the Church must be at pains to prevent any repetition of past evils.

2

The chief contribution of monachism to social progress has undoubtedly been its presentation, through an age of barbarism, of certain ideals which are essential to the

true development of human society. These are the ideals of obedience and self-subordination, of bodily purity and self-control, of poverty and simplicity of life, and of the dignity of labour.

Under the Roman Empire obedience had been enforced as a military necessity, and general habits of obedience had been fostered in all citizens. The dissolution of the Empire under the stress of barbarian invasions saw the passing of this virtue in large measure, except within the Church, where it was practised and proclaimed in a higher form than Rome had ever known. In the monasteries of Western Europe it was to be found in the midst of every token of indiscipline and disorder, where each man strove for his own hand, and none was willing to account any as his master who could not overcome him by force of arms. These orderly communities showed to the outer world what peace and prosperity were possible when men agreed to submit themselves to one another in the fear of God: they attracted many turbulent spirits who grew weary of strife: and they forced upon society generally the occasional reflexion that man's true happiness consists in obedient and humble service.

The invariable requirement of celibacy in monastic bodies was productive of serious moral evils, and was on the whole anti-social in its conception and working rather than beneficial to society [1]; but at least it served to rebuke the

[1] Tibet supplies a practical example of the results of an inordinate growth of monachism. "Since Buddhism was introduced as the State-religion in the eighth century A.D., the Tibetan nation, which formerly was one of the most virile in Eastern Asia, and overran and even conquered China more than once, has steadily declined in power and numbers until it now has not a tenth part of its former population. The only general census of the population hitherto taken appears to be one made by the Chinese, so long ago as 1737; but the proportion probably still holds good, though the total number has greatly declined through the population having died off, presumably in the main as a result of the widespread monasticism, for polyandry is far from common." (L. A. Waddell in E.R.E. vii. 788 f.)

In Ceylon where Buddhist monachism has been kept within due limits, "The nation as a whole has undoubtedly suffered from the celibacy of many of the most able and earnest; but, on the other hand, there is very little crime, and in certain important particulars, such as caste and the position of women, Ceylon is in advance of other parts of our Indian empire, with the single exception of Burma where the same causes have been at work and the same disadvantage felt." (T. W. Rhys Davids in E.R.E. iii. 334.)

lust of men in times when the utmost licence was permitted to the powerful and chastity was lightly estimated. The renunciation and self-control exercised by numbers of pure-living monks and nuns, and even in the most corrupt ages of monachism there were undoubtedly many such, strongly supported the Church's moral teaching and the rebukes offered by it to the vicious.[1]

Again, the monks greatly benefited society by their voluntary acceptance of poverty. Their ranks were recruited mainly from the upper classes, and it provided a powerful object-lesson to the world when each man or woman who sought to enter on a way of life which was regarded as the truest expression of Christianity was required to abandon every possession and learn the joy of the reward that belongs to utter surrender. The acquisitive instinct, so strong in men generally, was thus checked not only by precept but by impressive example.

And finally, the dignity of honest toil of hand and head, and the necessary conjunction of work and prayer, were strongly emphasised by the monastic brotherhoods, who conferred great benefit upon the lands they occupied, both by the work they accomplished and, perhaps still more, by the example they provided. Labour of many kinds was shown by them to be a part of the service that is due from man to God, to be performed with conscientious thoroughness and in closest union with the prayer which is the complementary part of man's obligation.

In addition, however, to the presentation of these necessary ideals monachism has aided the development of society by direct participation. A notable example of its influence for good is to be found in its treatment of women. In rude ages, when women were exposed to many dangers, the monastic system provided a sure sanctuary for any who had a vocation to the dedicated life: and in the nunnery they were not only safe from violence, but it was possible for them to rise to positions of responsibility and great

[1] *Cf.* L. S. Thornton, *Conduct and the Supernatural* p. 310. "The Christian monastic community exists, then, to keep the other-worldly and ascetic ideals ever fresh before the eyes of the world. Over against Christian marriage it sets the ideal of a family of celibates. It does this in no sense with a view to depreciating marriage, but in order to *preserve* it by exercising a strong influence on behalf of self-discipline, the only means by which the sex ideal can be maintained in its full purity and beauty."

honour.[1] This is frequently forgotten when the position of women in modern times is discussed. But here is clearly one of those "suggestions and experiments" made by the Middle Ages "to which the modern world would respond more readily than the mediæval." [2] After a long period of almost exclusive acceptance, under Puritan influence, of the valuable ideal [3] of the woman's career as Christian wife and mother, we are witnessing a recovery, on a much larger scale, of the ideal of monachism, that a woman may be called to a celibate life and to a career outside the sphere of the family.

By its promotion of learning and its work of education monachism has laid society under another heavy debt of obligation.[4] From its earliest beginnnings it insisted upon a knowledge of reading and writing in every monk; and in course of time, chiefly under the influence of Cassiodorus,

[1] *Cf.* L. Eckenstein, *Woman under Monasticism*, p. 478 f. "The career open to the inmates of convents both in England and on the continent was greater than any other ever thrown open to women in the course of modern European history; abilities might raise the nun to the rank of abbess, a position of substantial authority. In the Kentish charter, to which reference has been made, the names of the abbesses as representatives of religion follow those of the bishops. In Saxony it fell to an abbess to act as representative of the emperor during his absence. As independent landowners, who held their property of and from king and emperor, the abbess took rank with the lords temporal and spiritual in the right of jurisdiction which they exercised, and in the right of being represented in Parliament or at the Imperial Diet as the case might be."

[2] H. Johnstone in *Med. Contributions to Mod. Civil.*, p. 228.

[3] The ideal was not a new one. As Dr. H. B. Workman says in *Christ and Civilization*, p. 306, "Mediæval home life was oftentimes more beautiful than we are wont to allow. Again and again in the annals of the age we find records of devoted mothers who trained up their children for service in Church and State with an intensity of concentration which influenced their whole subsequent life. Of such were the mother of St. Anselm, and the mother of St. Bernard, and many other illustrious examples in cottage and castle. In the Middle Ages, as in any age, the germ-cell of all that was best in the social system of the times lay in the purity and consecrated zeal of Christian motherhood."

[4] It is interesting to compare the good work done by Buddhists in Burma. "The credit for the superiority of the Burman is entirely due to the monastic schools. These have existed for centuries, much as they may be seen now in country places. If the *sramanas* had done nothing else, they would deserve honour for the way in which they instruct the boys of the country." (J. G. Scott in E.R.E. iii. 40.)

an Italian civil servant turned monk, it made of each monastery a centre of culture in which not only the sacred scriptures but the writings of classical poets, philosophers, and historians were copied and studied,[1] and art and science were developed, while profound ignorance was everywhere prevalent without. Every monastery had its school, which provided an education available for all classes, for long the only education that was to be had: though, as the schools attached to cathedral and collegiate churches grew, the monastic schools gave themselves increasingly to the work of educating[2] *oblati*, the children who were specially dedicated to the service of the Church.

The philanthropic work of the monasteries has been subjected to much severe criticism. Since the time of Fuller it has been repeatedly urged that, instead of seeking to remedy root causes, they offered relief to all comers, and in such a manner that they became largely responsible for the creation of the very paupers they relieved. But it remains unquestionably true that, with whatever faults it discharged its difficult task, it was the Church alone that attempted to deal with the perennial problems of poverty and unemployment, with the care of the sick, and with the provision of hospitality for poor travellers; that it greatly minimised the hardships men suffered in barbarous times; and that modern organisations for all such purposes owe whatever efficiency they may possess largely to the splendid pioneer work which was carried on voluntarily through many hundreds of years by Christian monks.[3] The monasteries

[1] "With the rise of universities in the twelfth century and the multiplication of schools, the copying of manuscripts became a trade exercised independently of monasteries and of the devotion of the individual scholar." (J. W. Adamson in *Med. Contributions to Mod. Civil.*, p. 196.)

[2] "To suppose, as Mr. A. F. Leach does, that up to the end of the Middle Ages and into the Renascence nothing was taught in the monasteries except 'psalm-singing and a little elementary Latin grammar,' is grotesquely at variance with facts." (C. Butler, *Benedictine Monachism*, p. 325.)

[3] *Cf.* Dr. H. B. Workman. "Even the mediæval almsgiving, though doubtless indiscriminate and wasteful, oftentimes even productive of the very miseries it was intended to cure, must not be wholly judged by the rules of Political Economy. The cultivation of a habit, if not a sense, of pity, especially in a society otherwise brutal, is worth more than the accumulation of capital." (*Christ and Civilization*, p. 302.)

were very far from being mere refuges for the world-weary and for those who were not strong enough to take part in the struggle of life, but they did provide a shelter for such. They relieved not travelling beggars alone but also the sick and poor in their neighbourhood, both tending them and dispensing medicines: and in times of plague and famine the monks were foremost, or more commonly alone, in the performance of works of mercy.

The industrial and commercial activity undertaken by the monks as disciplinary toil and in the work of self-maintenance is an oft-told story which may fitly round off this brief record of their direct influence on social progress. When society began to recover from the paralysing effects of the passing of the Roman power, it was they who led the way in the revival of industry. Every monastery was a labour colony in which all the members were required to perform appointed tasks and to perform them faithfully. For long the chief work was agriculture, in the development and prosecution of which the monasteries played so large a part that their suppression was followed by a serious decline in this work. The monastery lands were cleared and tilled, forests being levelled and swamps drained, and every department of agriculture practised in them; live stock was kept, fisheries were properly worked, and cheese, beer, and wine were produced. In addition to farming the monks were great builders, they practised carpentry, smith's work, shoemaking, and bookbinding; and they became notably expert in weaving cloth, linen, and silk, and in working lace and tapestry. The fruits of their labour sufficed to satisfy their own needs, to admit of the exercise of hospitality and charity according to their usually very liberal standards, and to form the basis of commerce with buyers from without; and in their commercial dealings they were at pains to safeguard purchasers by supplying truthful descriptions of any goods offered for sale and by contentment with a just price.

But all this belongs to a bygone age. "The monastery was a characteristic institution of the Middle Ages, and it affords an excellent illustration of a type of economic organisation which was once very widely diffused and continued to flourish for centuries." [1] That type has passed

[1] W. Cunningham, *Christianity and Economic Science*, p. 21.

monachism has made its contribution to social development, and it is not seriously contended by any that it shall be restored to vigorous life in order to repeat its past services to society. Rather is it in the position, from the point of view of the social student and worker, of being regarded as a spiritual luxury which can be justified only with difficulty, if at all. What justification, then, is offered by those who know it from within and are eager to promote its continuance and extension? What is the primary aim and way of life of the monk?

In his *Benedictine Monachism*,[1] Dom C. Butler plainly disclaims any obligation of "work." "Associated with the modern conception of a religious order," he says, "is the idea of some special work to be done, some need of the Church to be met; and a man joins the order hoping thereby to be enabled the better to carry out this work to which he feels called. But with the Benedictines[2] it was not so: there was no special form of work which their organisation was designed to undertake. . . . The monk's object is to sanctify his soul and serve God by leading a life in community in accordance with the Gospel counsels."

In strict agreement with this Dom P. Delatte says,[3] "We monks are religious 'without addition,' we are religious only; we are given up to God to belong to Him solely. In our life no distraction and division is possible; our work is of the same nature as our life. We are not religious for the Work of God *and* for study, any more than for manual labour: for then our condition would be far inferior to that of the secular clergy who are directly concerned with souls.

[1] P. 28 f.

[2] This does not involve any limitation. The user of the Benedictine Rule stands simply as representative of the one monastic order as distinct from the religious orders. *Cf.* Abbot Gasquet's *Introduction* to Montalembert, p. xi. "It is necessary to draw a distinction between the Religious Orders, as now understood, and the Monastic Order. Both, indeed, set before themselves as an aim the realisation of the Gospel counsels; both, too, have much in common as to principles, traditions, and usages. But, while the former are societies, instituted at various periods in later ages to meet accidental needs of the Church, taking up the religious life as a means towards carrying out that special end, the latter is merely a systematised form of a life according to the Gospel counsels, existing, for its own sake, as a full expression of the Church's true and perfect life."

[3] *The Rule of St. Benedict*, p. 134.

We do not deny that a contemplative can and should study; we do not dispute that erudite labours or apostolic works may be lawfully undertaken and successfully accomplished by monks. We content ourselves with the affirmation that the proper and distinctive work of the Benedictine, his lot and his mission, is the liturgy."

And, once more, Abbot Gasquet asserts that "The *opus Dei* was the crown of the whole structure of the monastic edifice. It was pre-eminently the work of the monk, which was to take precedence of every other employment, and to which monastic tradition has ever given a marked solemnity." [1] Here is the work of the monk and herein lies his influence and social worth. "The perpetual round of prayer and praise is something more than an intercessory power. It, rightly understood, is the medium of intercourse between the monastic body and the people in the midst of which it dwells. No one is so dull that he cannot understand the faith in the unseen, the hope of another world, and the burning love of God which are manifested in the perennial sacrifice and song of praise of the monastic choir. Through the individual preaching of the monk, through his works, through his words of counsel and of comfort, through his hospitality, through his dealings with his fellow-men in all the varied relations of life, he exercises some portion of his apostolate; but the choir of the monastery is the monk's real pulpit, and the daily Office his most efficacious sermon."[2]

These authoritative expositions of the monastic ideal suggest that society must not look to monachism for any assistance other than that which is conveyed by means of its spiritual activity and influence. It would appear, therefore, that this must be weighed against the loss in which society is involved by the withdrawal of the monks from the ordinary duties of citizenship and by their failure to beget children. Is the equivalent such as to justify society's approval of monachism?

As to the celibacy of the members of the monastic order, it is not sufficient to say, with W. K. L. Clarke, "There will always be enough to obey the primitive human instincts which lead men and women to marriage; there will certainly be enough children born from these marriages to

[1] *Introd.* to Montalembert, p. xiii. [2] Ib. p. xvii.

carry on the race, if the Christian teaching on marriage is honoured. So we can but rejoice, if out of the great number who remain unmarried some do so in order to live a life separated from the world and devoted to unseen things." [1] The objection that is brought is not that the human race is in danger of being ended by monachism, but that, as Dr. H. B. Workman puts it, "Celibacy doomed the holiest and most intellectual to sterility; the future was left to those of coarser clay." [2] After all, however, this is a matter which is really independent of the recognition of monachism as a legitimate state of life. The compulsory celibacy of the priesthood is another matter; but those who enter *this* life where it is allowed could certainly not be relied upon to marry where it was refused. Monachism suggests and encourages celibacy, but it would be impossible to say to what extent it has actually prevented desirable marriages.

In regard to the balancing of spiritual gain over against material loss, it is fortunately unnecessary to attempt the problem. While it is true that the monk is bound only to the one duty of the unceasing worship of God, he does, nevertheless, make his contribution to social work in the great majority of cases. In a pamphlet dealing with *The Monastic Life in the Church* (London, 1913),[3] Dom Anselm Parker, O.S.B., says that "Of the 20 congregations into which the Benedictine Order is at present divided, 12 do parochial work, and they look after 1,400 Church missions. Educational work is common to nearly all, and in Austria and Bavaria many of the Government lycées or gymnasia are under the care of the monks." It is the opinion of Dom C. Butler, who writes frankly of the difficulty of finding work that may be suitably combined with, or rather used as a supplement to, the monk's primary duty, that educational work is the most satisfactory. The monk's function is, then, to practise the life of prayer with a concentration of effort which is not possible in the world, to give to men the fruits of his intellectual and spiritual labours by means of the spoken and written word, and constantly to uphold the ideals of the spiritual life as an inspiration to the world of men whose vision is ever being dimmed by their necessary preoccupation with material things.

[1] *The Lausiac History of Palladius*, p. 30.
[2] *Christ and Civilization*, p. 321.
[3] P. 18.

Thus understood monachism will probably win a somewhat grudging approval from the social enthusiast who wishes to see every man "pulling his weight"; with the proviso, however, that it would certainly become necessary to impose a strict limitation upon the number of monastic establishments were vocations to multiply to such an extent that the body of monks and nuns threatened to become an economic burden upon the community. The danger is small enough, while the life of the cloister maintains its strenuous character.

3

The great distinction between the monastic order and the religious orders is, as we have already seen, that, while the former exists primarily for the performance of the *opus Dei*, the daily and almost hourly worship of God, the latter have as their chief object the service of God through the service of man. That is to say, the religious orders have been established so as to respond to some particular needs of humanity as seen from the Church's point of view; and they have framed their mode of life in accordance with a system closely resembling that of the monastic life in many points, because they have believed that such a way would best promote the successful accomplishment of the end they had in view. The exigencies of their special work prevented them from requiring of their members either the stability of the monks or their assiduous attention to the work of devotion: but apart from these things they retained the chief features of the monastic life. Celibacy and complete detachment from the world there must be, so that every member might contribute to the work of the order without distraction and division of interest; a corporate devotional life according to rule was judged to be essential as the foundation and inspiration of all practical effort; and, for efficiency and thoroughness, unquestioning obedience to superiors was invariably stipulated. In addition it has been usual to practise silence and mortification, under direction.

The work of the orders is evangelistic, educational, and social, in varying proportion and with difference of emphasis: so that, as Dom F. Cabrol points out,[1] the classification of the more than 380 orders existing in the Roman Church

[1] E.R.E. x. 693.

is a matter of some difficulty. For our present purpose, however, they may very well be considered in association with the Dominicans and the Jesuits, who are the outstanding examples of those who devote themselves to evangelistic and educational work; and, on the other hand, with the Franciscans, whose excellence was recognised from the beginning of their history to lie more especially in their social work among the sick and poor.

St. Dominic (1170–1221) founded his order with a view to the conversion of the heretical Albigenses in the south of France, and required all who joined it to devote themselves to an austere life under the Rule of St. Augustine, to sacred study and to the work of prayer and preaching. The conception of the founder is well expressed by St. Thomas Aquinas in the phase *tradere aliis contemplata;* and to this conception the order has remained consistently loyal. It has produced great theologians, great preachers, and great artists, and among them not a few saints: and, while it faithfully continues its original work of preaching the Gospel to the poor in conjunction with the strenuous pursuit of theological study, it has supplemented its efforts in that field by inspiring numerous other congregations to devote themselves to the same task. The education and spiritual life of the clergy are specially cared for by Oratorians, Lazarists, Eudists, and Sulpicians: and Carmelites, Theatines, Passionists, Redemptorists, Oblates, and Marists are preaching in town and country all the world over, with others under similar vows, 15,000 out of a total of 18,000 missionaries belonging to various religious orders, to say nothing of 120 different congregations of women with 53,000 sisters, 10,000 of whom are natives. The goal of all this effort is the salvation of souls, it is true: but together with the work of evangelisation there goes, at all times, a genuine care for the moral and social betterment of the people, and the whole range of this particular department of the work carried on by ascetic communities, from the simplest preaching to the highest branches of theological study, may fairly be claimed as conducing to the general uplift and social welfare of the masses, though a serious qualification must be admitted in so far as the Gospel truth is obscured in any degree by error.

The Jesuits were founded by St. Ignatius Loyóla primarily for the work of teaching thoroughly the Church's Faith and for

the cultivation of learning in its many branches as the necessary equipment for the faithful and successful discharge of this work. "To teach the young, to preach to the ignorant and the heathen, and to guide Christians to perfection," [1] these were the ends proposed in the formation of the Society of Jesus: and the great skill and thoroughness of the Jesuits in the first of these works has been recognised from the early years of their history.[2] With masterly organisation they have devoted themselves especially to the higher education of youths in colleges and secondary schools, and not even their greatest enemies can refuse to recognise their brilliant success.[3] The opportunity left by the Jesuits and the inspiration afforded by them for the institution of other orders to deal similarly with the children of the poor was seized by The Brothers of the Christian Schools (or Christian Brothers), between 15,000 and 16,000 of whom are at present carrying on this work in over 2,000 schools; by the Piarists or Scolopes; by the Ursuline nuns; by the Assumptionists; by the Salesians, who make a special point of preparing children for trades; and by very many others, especially congregations of women. Again it will be said, no doubt, that all this educational effort made at ascetic cost is primarily born of a desire to spread the Faith rather than to promote social welfare: but in answer it may be contended that the effect is none the less to promote social righteousness far more surely than the mutilated secular education which has become so lamentably prevalent in recent times. Nor should hostility to certain aspects of the religious teaching which is given by these devoted instructors of the young be allowed completely to obscure the social value of their work.

Though study found a place in the life of the Franciscans at an early date in the history of the order, and was

[1] H. Thurston, S.J., in E.R.E. vii. 503.

[2] *Cf.* Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, Bk. I., quoted by Thurston.

[3] It is no exaggeration to say with Dr. C. A. Briggs, *Hist. of the Study of Theology*, ii. 136, that "While, for two centuries, they trained the best scholars of Europe, they also trained the best preachers, pastors, teachers and missionaries." And this was undoubtedly because "They believed in education as moulding the future man, and had a conviction of its power, which even to this day Protestants do not share, in spite of all their platform talk" (S. S. Laurie, *Studies in the Hist. of Educational Opinion from the Renaissance*, p. 88).

subsequently developed,[1] it was regarded with suspicion by the zealots: for the followers of St. Francis were expected to devote themselves to works of charity with a whole-heartedness which would leave little time for other things. It was for them to live in the poorest quarters of the cities, where narrow streets and dirty hovels prevailed, sharing the poverty and sickness and squalor which marked the lives of the common people, and bringing them such relief as they could by devoted ministry and the communication of spiritual joy. "They were the relieving officers of the starving before the world knew anything of the poor laws. They were the medical officers of the destitute before the guardians of the union had learnt the trick of doing the doctoring so cheaply that it is hardly worth having. They were the house-to-house visitors ages before 'slumming' had come into fashion. They were the nurses who watched by the pallets of shuddering wretches clutched by the putrid fever, the small-pox, or the plague. When cowards were running away in troops from the touch of loathsome carcases reeking with pestilence, *they* were the men who carried these poor lumps of corruption to the churchyards, dug the graves, and tenderly dropped into the earth all that was earthly of the dead."[2] It is scarcely too much to attribute to the Franciscans the practical disappearance of the scourge of leprosy from European countries: and for this, as for all the many-sided social work they undertook, they are being widely acclaimed to-day, and the need of another St. Francis is keenly realised.[3]

The brothers of St. John of God, the Camillians, and the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul (or Sisters of Charity) are the

[1] The interests of the poor were specially provided for. "The Franciscan revival ushered in the golden age of our universities; for a few years Oxford and Paris were accessible to the poorest." (H. B. Workman in *Christ and Civilization*, p. 300.)

[2] A. Jessopp in *Some Urgent Questions in Christian Lights*, p. 37 f.

[3] *Cf.* V. D. Scudder, *Socialism and Character*, p. 100 f. "The ascetic impulse which drove the finest spirits to flee from life to the shelter of the cloister makes little appeal to modern men—though in ever-new disguises it is likely to reappear as long as history shall last. But the Little Poor Man and his followers did not flee from life, rather they wooed it. They repudiated without abandoning that world which they lost but to find and serve. And modern thought finds their brief episode in the Christian story the most perfect expression since the first century of the social ideals of the Gospels."

most notable of the very numerous orders which, following the Franciscans, have devoted themselves to the care of the sick, and especially to hospital work; but the Somaschi, the Sisters of Wisdom, the Sisters of Evron, the Sisters of Nevers, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, the Sisters of Nazareth, the Little Sisters of the Poor, and a host of others, are to-day tending the sick and poor in their hospitals, orphanages, homes, and schools, with a devotion such as the world has not found except among the disciples of Christ.

In the Church of England since the Reformation there has been a series of steadily persistent attempts to establish religious communities of varying type, which either failed or enjoyed a very limited success, until the 19th century, when a remarkable growth of these communities took place, and is still continuing, as a result of the Oxford Movement.[1] Generally they have represented an endeavour to live a semi-monastic life, without any special intention of the service of man: but there has been in nearly every case an accompanying performance of good works, especially the care of the sick and the education of the children of the poor. The first notable example was Nicholas Ferrar's establishment at Little Gidding of a small community which was dispersed by the Puritans in 1646. A strict rule was observed in this house of quiet, and the day was rigorously divided up: but works of charity were by no means excluded, and education was offered to children whose parents cared to send them. At the opening of the 18th century Bishop Ken became director and spiritual adviser to a little community of women living at Naish House on the Bristol Channel, the "good ladies of Naish," as they came to be called by those who welcomed their ministrations. Towards the middle of the same century William Law is found at Kingscliffe enjoying a sort of community life in company with some at whose expense almshouses and schools were built for the benefit of their poorer neighbours.

The spiritual force of the Oxford Movement, however, greatly multiplied the number of vocations to the specially dedicated life and gradually effected a complete change in the attitude of the authorities of the Church, with the result that "The growth of Religious Orders in the English Church in the period 1845–1900 is almost without parallel in

[1] See H. P. K. Skipton, *Community Life in the Church of England since the Reformation*, *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1918.

Christian history." [1] Of seven religious orders founded for men [2] one, the Society of the Divine Compassion, has for its object "works of mercy, specially to the poor and suffering," and, after the example of the Franciscans, ministers to lepers; the oldest, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, undertakes missionary and educational work, in subordination to the cultivation of the dedicated life; the Society of the Sacred Mission similarly aims at increasing "the number of those who give their lives to the Divine Service," spreading the Gospel abroad, and cultivating a true knowledge of the Faith; and the Community of the Resurrection, which proposes as its object "Religious Life and Work," gives much attention to the training of candidates for ordination to the priesthood. In addition to these communities there are in the Colonies several Bush Brotherhoods which undertake evangelistic work in districts of special difficulty. The women's communities far outnumber those for men, and, with but few exceptions, have for their object the dedicated life together with the performance of educational work and varied works of mercy. The Community of St. Mary at Wantage, the Sisters of the Church, or the Kilburn Sisters, as they are more popularly known, and the Sisters of St. John the Baptist at Clewer, are perhaps the most notable among the forty or more communities now in existence.

Yet it seems clear that, so far as the Anglican Church is concerned, the community movement is still in an experimental stage, and that neither the distinction between the monastic order and the religious orders, nor the pressing need for the development of these orders, is as yet widely appreciated. The duty of the conversion of the heathen world and of fully Christianising the semi-pagan populations of nominally Christian lands not only cannot be delegated to any but Christians, but is such as to require that those Christians who undertake it shall be very largely people who are free from all hindrances, strengthened by a strong sense of fellowship, obedient to direction as to the place and manner of their labour, and not costly in their maintenance. These conditions are best fulfilled in community life, and there can be no doubt that a much larger element of

[1] S. L. Ollard in *A Dict. of Eng. Ch. Hist.*, p. 503.

[2] For details see A. T. Cameron, *Directory of Rel. Communities in the Ang. Comm.*

this is needed in modern Anglican missions, with due provision for the recognition of episcopal authority.

As to works of mercy and the work of education, in spite of the fact that these have so largely passed out of the directing hands of the Church, there are still departments of life in which the needs are not all met, or are not adequately met, by official action. Much is left to voluntary aid; and Christians are needed where work is hard and uncongenial and the remuneration is slight. Individuals may sometimes do much: the organised work of Christians living in the world will do more: but there are conditions in which the work can be done best of all by a religious community, especially perhaps where it is woman's work.[1] These ascetic societies must be formed by the Church as the needs present themselves, and they must be expected to take many different shapes. "We are waiting for a leader. We are waiting for the captain of the army of God. When he comes, he will not be long before he finds his regiments. We are at our wits' ends now, each one looking his fellow in the face, and vacantly asking, 'What next?' Depend upon it, we or those who come after us will see strange Religious Orders by and by, whatever names they may be called by."[2]

Economic considerations make it necessary that monastic establishments should be limited in number; and it might seem at first sight that religious orders should fall under the same rule. Like the friars they would be entirely, or, if endowments were bestowed upon them and permitted, partly dependent upon the support they received from the faithful, and therefore, in a degree, mendicant. The word mendicant is misleading, however. It suggests the necessity for the maintenance of beggars, without suggesting at the

[1] *Cf.* P. Gardner, *Evol. in Christian Ethics*, p. 228 f. "It seems to me clearly established by the course of history that for some kinds of religious and social work the best organisation consists of societies of women living together and bound by vows of celibacy. Until a woman definitely sets aside all thoughts of matrimony she is an incomplete being, and liable to be constantly disturbed by sexual ideas. But if she deliberately resolves on the single life, she sets free a whole range of faculties, intellectual and active, for the service of society. . . . It is highly probable that communities of women which set themselves to any branch of work, religious, educational, or social, will always desire a religious consecration for their union."

[2] A. Jessopp in *Some Urgent Questions in Christian Lights*, p. 43.

same time that the maintenance that is given to them is but inadequate payment for the work which they are performing. St. Francis had no intention of creating a band of beggars, but a band of workers: but he was content that these workers should receive the bare necessaries of life at the hands of those to whom they ministered.[1] Religious communities, it may be confidently asserted, work more cheaply, as well as more thoroughly, than most other organisations, and they will serve society with a splendid economy so long as they have the true spirit of Christ. When that leaves them it is time for their dissolution.

4

Monachism and crusades of service may be expected to do much for the social organism: but, however extended and important their influence, they do not by their existence exempt Christians who are living the ordinary life of citizenship from the discharge of a similar duty according to their opportunities by the practice of ascetic living. Society has a right to expect it of them no less than of the others. It is the opinion of an acute observer of the existing situation that "A rule of life, a discipline, a standard and habit of conduct in the social relations which make up the texture of life for the mass of mankind—the establishment of this among its own members, and their maintenance by the corporate conscience of the Christian society, is among the most vital tasks of any Church which takes its religion seriously."[2] This cannot be denied. The whole body of

[1] *Cf.* P. Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, Eng. tr., p. 121 f. "The intentions of St. Francis have been more misapprehended on this point than on any other, but it may be said that nowhere is he more clear than when he ordains that his friars shall gain their livelihood by the work of their hands. He never dreamed of creating a *mendicant* order, he created a *labouring* order. It is true we shall often see him begging and urging his disciples to do as much, but these incidents ought not to mislead us; they are meant to teach that when a friar arrived in any locality and there spent his strength for long days in dispensing spiritual bread to famished souls, he ought not to blush to receive material bread in exchange. . . . We are true and just to St. Francis and to the origin of the mendicant orders only when we do not separate the obligation of labour from the praise of mendicity."

[2] R.H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society*, p. 236.

Christians, and not only those of its members who respond to a special vocation, are required to act as leaven, as salt, and as light, in the midst of a society which is oppressed with darkness, poisoned with corrupting elements, and constantly in need of spiritual quickening.

A keen realisation of this obligation has persuaded some to the practice of a sectarian puritanism which has failed to commend itself to the Church Catholic. Commonly representing a reaction against luxury and immorality, it has also been associated with defiance of ecclesiastical authority, rejection of certain elements of the Faith, and a degree of extravagance which has taken the form, not of bodily austerities, but of exaggerated soberness, narrowness and exclusiveness. Of very limited occurrence and influence in the Church of the first fifteen centuries, it became widespread and possessed of considerable power in the post-Reformation Church, and has proved itself a persistent form of asceticism which, when purged of some false elements, may prove to be by no means irreconcilable with the Catholic tradition.

Like monachism this Protestant puritanism includes a clear recognition of the obligation of humility before God and of obedience to His commands, but it adds, " as received by the individual conscience." It cannot be credited, therefore, with the maintenance of the ideal of obedient submission to human authority : rather it has promoted a strong sense of individual worth and of independence, as to the value of which for social development there is room for difference of opinion ; but which, by its encouragement of self-assertion and competitive enterprise has probably worked more harm than good in the world of industry and commerce. Though it set its face against celibacy and exalted the life of the family, it enforced a high standard of moral purity, and preserved this ideal to England's great benefit through the several periods of gross living and flaunting immorality which marred the 17th and 18th centuries. Commonly supposed to have been opposed to the arts and to all that makes for liberal culture, and in spite of assertions to the contrary the general charge is not very wide of the mark, the Puritans cared at any rate for the elements of education, and strove to provide them for all. Those who settled in America were responsible for the beginnings of a wise educational system : Francke, the second founder of Continental Pietism, began the practice of

establishing schools for the poor; and it is recorded of Wesley, representative of a later and more Catholic puritanism, that, wherever he went, he left behind him meeting-houses and schools. Noble philanthropy and humanitarian zeal, also, were to be found, especially among the Methodists, who, under Wesley's leadership and afterwards, endeavoured to deliver the masses both from their sufferings and from the coarseness of their lives.

Frugal ways of life, simplicity of dress, and avoidance of all display, are markedly characteristic of puritanism: but all this was frequently endangered by the very success of the industrious habits which accompanied these things. For Puritan asceticism led to a resumption of industrial activity with very great zeal. The working day was lengthened by reducing the time set apart for worship, and by disregarding saints' days Protestants increased the number of working days in the year from 260 to 310. So diligent and so successful were they, so ready to take advantage of the special opportunities of their time, that manufactures and trade passed chiefly into their hands in every land where they were found. When she drove out the Huguenots France lost the best of her artisans and merchants. Great material advantage resulted from this successful energy, but a dangerous spirit of competition was introduced in place of the earlier spirit of co-operation; and society has yet to learn how best to combine the good that is in the two, which are broadly the Catholic and the Protestant contributions respectively to this aspect of social progress.[1]

In the endeavour to maintain a high standard of morality it was often necessary for puritans to protest against the extravagance and luxury of others, to withdraw themselves

[1] *Cf.* F. M. Crouch in *The Church and Industrial Reconstruction*, p. 258 f. "The Genevan Church, by substituting for the 'inner asceticism' of Catholicism as practised in the cloister and in the hermitage an 'outer asceticism' which viewed daily work as necessary discipline, promoted the growing preoccupation with business as such. The Calvinist was, in a word, encouraged by his Church authorities to engage in daily productive labour both for the sake of keeping out of mischief and of providing for the needs of his own family or other dependents. Profits accumulating by virtue of the abstemiousness and general sobriety of Calvinistic business men before long caused the supplanting of the original motive of such daily labour with the new motive of direct profit-seeking."

from immodest and degrading forms of amusement, to refrain from the use of pagan accompaniments to Christian festivals, and to live abstemiously while others indulged themselves with the utmost licence. Their very confusion of the Christian Sunday with the Jewish Sabbath, with its resulting oppressive sabbatarianism, was not without highly beneficial results to the whole English people. But such necessary and righteous protest only too readily passes over into a fanatical dulness and dourness which are strongly resented not only by the ungodly, but by all who believe that a gift of humour and a capacity for happiness are to be numbered among God's most precious endowments of human nature: and unnecessary severity in the exclusion of innocent pleasures must be reckoned as an injurious perversion from which puritanism stands in need of deliverance. Bishop Hacket's motto, "Serve God and be cheerful," is most truly Christian.

Over against this puritanism Catholicism presents not only the general asceticism that is practised by every member of the Church, but also in its later history a special asceticism undertaken by groups of people living in the world but definitely associated with one of the religious orders, and bound by certain of its rules. "From the 12th century onwards we find a number of half-monastic orders, Teutonic Knights, Hospitallers, Tertiaries of St. Francis, Beguines, brotherhoods and the rest. The life of the town was leavened with these half-ascetic clubs, which besides enabling the layman to do something for the salvation of his own soul, undoubtedly developed obedience to civil order, and fostered a spirit of charity and altruism." [1]

The origin of the Tertiaries, the most important type of all these organisations, is probably not rightly regarded as due to the Franciscan movement, but is to be sought some two or three centuries earlier.[2] Known as the Third Order because they were neither monks nor canons, a considerable body of lay preachers pledged themselves to discharge the work which was being neglected by a corrupt and ignorant

[1] H. B. Workman in *Christ and Civilization*, p. 320.

[2] See Bede Jarrett, *The Eng. Dominicans*, pp. 86 and 208 f. based on Père Mandonnet, *Les origines de l'ordo de Penitentia* (Fribourg, 1898), *Les règles et le gouvernement de l'ordo de Penitentia au XIII Siècle* (Paris, 1902), and Père Mortier, *Maîtres Généraux*, ii. 220–250.

clergy: and, after being formally suppressed by papal authority on account of the heresies which grew up among them, they were at length permitted by Innocent III to preach penance, that is morals, but not doctrine. When the Religious Orders came into being in the 13th century, these laymen became attached to them, according to their locality, as Dominican, Franciscan, Augustinian, or Servite Tertiaries; and, continuing to live in the world, were bound by some of the rules of their particular order and committed to the work of assisting in the fulfilment of its special ideals. This system has persisted until the present day, and is a great source of strength to the Roman Church.[1]

Whether the needs of to-day can best be met by the extension and adaptation of such a system of Third Orders is a debatable question. But whatever practical steps are taken, the end in view must be nothing less than the restoration of an ascetic discipline in the lives of Christian men and women generally. Membership in the Church should itself prove sufficient to promote such discipline to an adequate degree: if it does not, then it would seem that the establishment of guilds and societies with particular objects should be encouraged, and carefully drawn rules proposed for acceptance. In these the monastic ideals of poverty, chastity, and obedience, may not be set wholly on one side, though the first and the third will require to be presented in something less than the absolute form in which they are associated with the monastic life. But the basis of every rule will be the Gospel precepts, fasting, almsgiving, and prayer, broadly interpreted and variously applied. The prayer-life of union is the goal of all endeavour; the self-discipline which is fasting, and the altruistic service which is almsgiving, lead up to it naturally and directly; so that the three may be conveniently considered in some detail in that order [2] with a view to discovering their present-day application.

It is an injury to society as well as an offence against God when men pamper their bodies with rich and dainty foods

[1] With the needs of that Church in view, Bede Jarrett suggests that "it is possible that coming years will see a development of Tertiary life as an aid in the task of instruction, which the increasing multiplication of converts will necessitate in England." (*The Eng. Dominicans*, p. 213.) There is food for serious reflection here.

[2] *Cf.* A. J. Worlledge, *Prayer*, p. 152.

and seriously diminish their physical and mental powers by excessive use of intoxicants. The strenuous character of modern life and the fact that the human body has become accustomed by long use to frequent meals of a less substantial character than hitherto, make it scarcely possible that men generally should fast in any rigorous degree, if by fasting abstention from all food is understood. But the special temptation of modern times in respect of food lies in the fact that the least necessary foods are commonly prepared in the most inviting forms; and fasting, in the sense of abstinence from what is pleasant but harmful, or at least wasteful, is clearly demanded. The ascetic is not bound to be a prohibitionist, but he will certainly be an advocate of strict temperance in the use of alcoholic liquors and tobacco. They have their uses, which only fanaticism will refuse to recognise; but these uses are closely attended by such appalling evils, directly and indirectly consequent, that complete rejection or abstemious use is the only way of safety.

Luxury in every form is economically bad, it is provocative to the poor who see it flaunted before them, and it is morally degrading to those who indulge in it. The Christian who has the ability to live luxuriously, but fasts from all extravagance, and practises simplicity in his dress, his home, and his whole manner of life, is, therefore, rendering good service to society. Some, who are themselves innocent of luxury, need to beware of being luxurious by proxy. To spend extravagantly for the satisfaction of those one loves, wife, or children, or personal friends, is but a distorted selfishness in no way improved by its indirectness.

A love of pleasure and a marked decay of seriousness are commonly noted as characteristic of the present age. Sport occupies an unduly prominent place and claims an excessive proportion of time and attention; there is a widespread craving for amusement, which is purchased with a reckless prodigality, and is only too frequently vulgar and demoralising in its evil suggestiveness; and gambling and betting in a great variety of forms foster a spirit of detachment from the claims of steady work, induce an unhealthy excitement, and create a devastating distress in many homes. If society is to be preserved from rottenness before it is too late, the Christian brotherhood must fast uncompromisingly in respect of these deadly tastes. Recreation is clearly indispensable, and the true ascetic can never be guilty

of the error of attempting to rule out innocent amusement and healthy sport; but unless they are free from all suggestion of moral offence, restricted within proper limits, and purchasable at a price which is consistent with all other claims upon his purse, he must forgo them. The problem of Sunday observance is one of peculiar difficulty. Christian opinion is acutely divided between the advocacy of a modified continental Sunday on the one hand, and adherence to a very slightly relaxed sabbatarianism on the other. In view of the existing passion for sport, however, and of the general disposition to shirk thought about the real issue of life and to omit the due acknowledgment of God in divine worship, asceticism will probably move discreetly in the latter direction rather than the former.

Closely connected with the pursuit of pleasure is the serious increase of sexual licence. New knowledge, social disorder, and pressing dangers, have combined to remove old restraints to an alarming extent, and very many of both sexes have shamelessly abandoned themselves to the satisfaction of their lust, without any control other than that which is necessary to secure them against the natural implications and consequences of their action. Immodest dress and behaviour is an important contributory factor to this depravity, whether it is due merely to thoughtless vanity and sheer *joie de vivre* or to carefully calculated enticement. Here asceticism will not impose drab and ugly garments and the segregation of the sexes; nor will it frown upon the courtship of young lovers and the union of those who are truly called to the holy estate of matrimony: but it will forbid all selfish indulgence and will require of men and women alike a careful discipline in act and word, and in the innermost thoughts from which they spring. It will not tolerate the torture of the body as an alien and unclean thing, but with the honour due to that which is a temple of the Holy Ghost the ascetic will train himself in ways of purity and self-control and reverent regard for others; and, if he be called to the celibate life for the sake of the Kingdom, he will not fail.

There remains the obligation to share in the fast of humility and obedience to lawful authority. A spirit of revolt is abroad against the authority which is imposed upon men from without and equally against the authority which they have themselves set up. Self-assertion is accompanied

by a large measure of irresponsible fickleness and whimsical inconsistency. Men yield themselves to the impulse of the moment or to the claims of unabashed self-interest, and do not hesitate to cancel bonds to which they have pledged themselves in all solemnity and seeming honesty of purpose. The authority of God and the majesty of His law constrain the ascetic, however, to yield himself in humbleness of soul to the powers that be, to practise unswerving loyalty to those whom he has accepted as leaders, and to honour his word at all times, though it be to his own grievous hindrance.

Almsgiving is a duty which Christians have freely discharged in the past, and, though they have sometimes thought more about the good they were doing to their own souls by dispensing charity than about the relief they were affording to distressed human beings, it is certain that there has been much real love and much real sacrifice in their assistance of the poor. The protest "Not charity but justice" is born not of resentment against the spirit in which charity has been administered but of discontent with that division of classes and unequal distribution of wealth which makes it necessary for some to receive help and possible for others to bestow it. Behind it there is a vision of a society in which all receive a sufficient reward and none depends in any degree upon the benevolence of another. This is probably as visionary as the picture of a society in which all are healthy and strong and hospitals exist only for the purpose of treating those who have suffered through accident; though there is no doubt that it will be possible for future generations to approximate much more closely to such ideals than we are able to do at present. For a long time to come, at least, it will be necessary for the spirit of charity to operate and for citizens generally to be prepared to afford relief to the aged, to the sick, and to the unemployed, by means of the payment of rates and taxes, and after that to give voluntarily out of what remains, for the relief of special cases and for the furtherance of special causes.

The Christian ascetic will make a beginning in this matter by being perfectly honest in every statement which he submits to those who are appointed to claim from him his legal contribution to the work of relief. He is not free to withhold money by misrepresentation or by concealment of facts,

however large his voluntary gifts may be.[1] His first duty is to the State, by whose sole protection he is in a position to earn and possess money. It is his business next to determine in accordance with some principle what part of the money remaining to him may be further applied to other forms of good work. His distribution of gifts must not be haphazard and unintelligent, but systematic and considered; and as a Churchman he will be guided to a large extent by the local, diocesan, and general needs of his Church, and by the various appeals for help for general purposes which are voiced by it. He will exercise due discrimination and honesty, supporting those objects first which most commend themselves to him as worthy; he will give without ostentation: and he will be content to find his reward in the joy of giving. Special claims will sometimes have to be met, and the necessity for sacrifice beyond what was contemplated may arise; in this the ascetic may be severely tested, but if he has the spirit of Christ he will go far.

Before approaching the duty of almsgiving in the narrower sense, however, employers of labour and promoters of industrial and commercial enterprise are called to the exercise of Christian charity in determining the limitation of their profits. These are conditioned mainly by the wages they pay and the market price of the commodities in which they deal. In respect of the former they are exposed to the temptation of sweating; the danger in the latter case is that of profiteering. The Christian here finds himself in a position of extreme difficulty, because he is not altogether a free agent. He finds that wages and prices are commonly fixed either by some authority or by a general acceptance of what is known as the law of supply and demand. To act independently is seemingly to attempt to work under impossible conditions and to invite certain failure. Yet the system is ultimately in the hands of those who work it. Even individual tempering of it where it works harshly is possible; and the corporate action of a band of earnest Christians would do much. Certainly the limitation of excessive profits by the reduction of prices and the increase

[1] St. Antonino of Florence allowed an exception in his *Summa Moralis*. When it is recognised that everybody makes false returns, then to make a correct statement would be to offer to pay more than one's proper share, and that is not required by justice! See Bede Jarrett, *Mediæval Socialism*, p. 78.

of wages is a necessity which must be plainly recognised by any who are striving to do business on a Christian basis ; and the definition of " excessive " is not beyond the capacity of business men possessed of a Christian conscience.

The work by which men earn the money they are able to apply to the relief of the necessities of others is itself a form of service to be reckoned as almsgiving. Whether it is work of hand or head, whether it is skilled or unskilled labour, it represents the devotion of God-given powers to the service of the community in response to vocation, and the ascetic is able to spend himself in his work with an even truer sense of direct personal sacrifice than he can find in dispensing the money which his labour produces.

The world's work includes many arduous and distasteful varieties of toil, for which it is becoming increasingly difficult to find workers. Many men shirk the acceptance of posts which are held to be unsuited to their social position, and on the other hand many are found unwilling to accept responsibility. Ill-paid services are very generally avoided, even where the services are recognised as highly important and the remuneration as the best that can be offered ; the ministry of the Church, for example, is faced with the prospect of a serious reduction in numbers partly because the stipends paid to many of the clergy are miserably inadequate. Here is the opportunity of the ascetic, who puts service before reward. He may find himself called to a life of celibacy and poverty in order that necessary work may be performed ; and, however great the sacrifice that is involved, he dare not turn aside. His almsgiving must include the surrender of himself and all his powers, not in a foolish and vainglorious heroism which makes it easy for other men to turn his sacrifice to financial advantage, but so that essential services which cannot otherwise be maintained may not fail. And those who have claims on him, of blood or of friendship, must yield him to his life's work in a complementary act of almsgiving.

As a result of measures taken for the protection of workers from the slavery of continuous toil through long hours daily, it has come about that many men are now prepared to work for only a small part of each day, and to insist upon their right to the enjoyment of a very considerable leisure. Little or no regard is had to the varied strain of different occupations or to the particular circumstances under which

individuals are working; but there is a distinct tendency to lay down general rules and to enforce their observance everywhere, so that even where men would willingly work for longer hours with advantage to themselves and to the community they are often prevented from doing so. This is a tyranny which cannot long be suffered. Human need requires that men shall be free to minister to it according to their powers, and the time has already come when many ought to be not only permitted to work longer but strongly urged to do so. The ascetic will claim liberty both from the requirement of virtual slavery with its excessive and injurious task-work and from the undue restriction of his ability to serve his fellows. Where he is unfettered, his hours of work will be determined mainly by the need of the society to which he belongs and by his own capacity for service; and where his occupation is such as to necessitate the fixing of a regular number of hours' work in each day, he will do his utmost to promote a standard which is fair to the community as well as to himself, and he will always be ready to meet emergencies and times of special need by working in excess of the usual hours.

Nor will he give grudging service and scant measure. The introduction of a brief working day has unfortunately been attended in some cases by a serious diminution of zeal and energy, while a mistaken regard for weaker brethren and a false hope of preventing unemployment have led to the adoption of what is known as "ca' canny"; but the ascetic is constrained by a higher loyalty and a wider honesty to give of his best in all that he undertakes. His daily toil is nothing less than an offering to Almighty God. Therefore it is to be performed faithfully and strenuously; it must represent the utmost of which he is capable; and its quality may be spoiled neither by deliberate withholding of energy nor by any carelessness of workmanship.

When all his appointed work has been duly performed, he may still find it possible to surrender some of his leisure in voluntary toil, and he will experience a deep satisfaction in thus giving service without reward. Choosing some way of help that has a special appeal for him, he will be exposed to the temptation of neglecting his proper duties for the sake of his free service: this he must carefully avoid as weak self-indulgence and gross dishonesty. If, however, he can preserve a right proportion between the two, doing with

equal good will the work for which he is paid and the work which he delights to give for nothing and making a proper distribution of the rewards of his toil, he will be fairly discharging the obligation of almsgiving and surely promoting the increase of social righteousness.

Prayer is for the ascetic a strenuous endeavour after the enlightenment and expansion of his soul and a sustained adventure in the practical exercise of fellowship with God and man. Refusing to be limited by the things that are seen or to be daunted by the suspicions and hostility of men, rejecting every temptation to inertia and to the sin of fear, he moves out in quest of light and life and wins deliverance from the deadly perils of isolation. Wide and clear vision, unquenchable hope, and a mighty impulse of love are the fruits of this glorious venture which is prayer.

Of the need for a great revival of its practice there can be no question. Public worship and private prayer alike show signs of serious neglect; and as a direct and inevitable result of this neglect there is a paralysing prevalence of mistrust, misunderstanding, and prejudiced obstruction among men. There is no lack of sympathy for sufferers: but among active workers there is a fundamental lack of that true sympathy which is to be gained only by developing the powers of the soul through the activity of communion with the Father of all men. The ascetic must, therefore, give himself with all diligence to the spiritual effort of prayer, in order that he may be enabled to see and to feel with something of the largeness of God's own vision and with something of the breadth, and length, and height, and depth of God's own love. In the exercise of his Christian priesthood he must count it his privilege and high duty to make daily intercession for all estates of men, bearing their needs on his heart with a growing power of appropriation, until he becomes one with those for whom he prays, in so effective a unity that his association with them in the life of prayer is necessarily extended to the life of human intercourse.

Here he will be met with narrow and short-sighted policies, with selfish disclination to surrender privilege or to run risks, and with suspicion, ingratitude, controversy, and determined resistance. Continuing instant in prayer after the conclusion of each period of definite communion with God, he will set himself to undertake every legitimate

risk, to do the right without fear of consequences, and to embrace in loving purpose those who are opposed to him no less than those who are in agreement with him, in the attempt to realise the vision and to exercise the sympathy with which his prayer has endowed him. The many groups into which his fellows are divided will be seen by him in the light of the whole, and he will ever strive to bridge gulfs and so to assist in the realisation of that living unity which is experienced by him in anticipation when, in his moments of intensest prayer, he is caught up to God and filled with the joy of union. Economic, social, political, national, and racial antagonisms are waiting for this sole solution of the deadlock which they present. There is no other way.

By organising itself in order to secure just treatment for all its workers Labour has developed a corporate sense of opposition to Capital, which is inevitably affected in its attitude to Labour in return; and, having assumed responsibility for the welfare of its workers, Labour now rejects whatever may remain of that paternal relationship which not infrequently existed in former times between the employer and his workmen. There is no denial that that relationship worked for good in many cases, but it is held to have involved an assumption of superiority and authority which must give place to one of equality and joint responsibility. The ascetic as such is not required to assess the respective merits of the old position and that which is now claimed: but, on whichever side he finds himself, whether as employer or employee, whether as an advocate of the old or of the new, he will endeavour in a spirit of prayer to allay all bitterness and to promote good feeling. As a worker he will not be blind to the value of benevolence in employers, and, if he advance the claim to a revision of the existing system, he will do so with a frank acknowledgment that the concession of the most extreme demands for equality would be of no value apart from the existence of a right understanding. As an employer he will not resent the suggestion that the time has come for more than paternal solicitude and filial dependence, he will not angrily withdraw the kindness that is criticised as inadequate and bitterly refuse the new type of association that is sought; but with a genuine desire to promote good fellowship and unity he will surrender privilege and share responsibility wherever possible, making careful

and friendly experiment in the hope of discovering a better way than he has hitherto known.

Employers of labour and all who are engaged in commercial enterprise are necessarily involved in competition: but the ascetic will know how to keep competition within its proper limits so as to prevent it from becoming injurious. Prayer is a strong incentive to competition in service, but it is an effectual check on competitive selfishness. Nor will it tolerate the perversion of fellowship and co-operation into a means of conducting a purely selfish warfare by the establishment of trusts and rings. Workmen in different trades do not commonly regard one another with sufficiently friendly feelings, and they are often arbitrary in their attitude towards unskilled or partly trained workers in their own trade. The ascetic, on the contrary, will stand for a strong spirit of brotherhood among all who labour, yet not so as to encourage the promotion of merely selfish ends by the use of the strike or other legitimate form of organised warfare.

Society is further divided against itself by an acute class-consciousness which is variously based upon sex, and differences of birth and culture, of material prosperity, of political partisanship, and of religious outlook. In the presence of common danger these distinctions are softened, and they are robbed of a large measure of their divisive power; with the return of normal conditions they declare themselves again in sharper outline and resume their function of separating men into hostile camps. Prayer will do more surely and more lastingly that which national danger can accomplish only temporarily and insecurely. Recognising that there are "diversities of gifts" and "diversities of ministrations" and "diversities of workings," the Christian ascetic, whether man or woman, of good family and breeding or of humble origin and limited education, rich or poor, revolutionary, moderate, or reactionary in politics, will see each group in its true proportion, will maintain sympathetic relations with all, and will endeavour not only to "will the common will" of the inclusive national group, but to will the ideal will of that nation regarded as a people of God.

Similarly national and racial antagonisms can be resolved only by an intense realisation of a common humanity, a realisation which is to be gained by prayer alone.

Cosmopolitanism is born of a genial tolerance of all men, or of a disposition to philosophise about the human nature which is shared by mankind, or else it is a debased and limited sense of brotherhood resulting from the desire to seek out in every nation those who are ready to make common cause on behalf of specific groups of workers. But the ascetic by his prayer is enabled to realise by faith a true commonwealth of all the nations, in which the Kingdom of God begins to declare itself visibly: and, without diminution of true patriotism, he labours for the peaceful association of men of every colour and tongue and class in the promotion of liberty and justice and righteousness upon the earth.

This labour is truly ascetic, involving strong continued effort in the practice of reconciling prayer. Like his Master, who exclaimed as He wept, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" [1] the ascetic will sometimes be moved to deep distress of soul by the opposition which he encounters: but, like Christ again, he will never cease to pray with intense earnestness "That they may all be one," [2] to suffer gladly for the fulfilment of his great desire, and to persist unfailingly in his glorious hope.

All this may appear to some to be an idle re-statement of the obvious, merely equivalent to the assertion, "If men were perfect, there would be no social ills." On the contrary, it is a plain statement of the practical duties of Christians at this present juncture, not only possible of achievement, but impossible of refusal by any who are true lovers of Christ. To be a Christian is to bear a cross: this is the cross that is offered in this generation to all who rejoice in the Name: this is the practice of asceticism which is demanded alike of those who laud and of those who deplore the self-torturing excesses of earnest men who lived in far-off times. When the Church is able to leaven the world with Christians who thus faithfully practise its threefold rule, fasting and giving and praying in discharge of their spiritual citizenship, the ills of society will begin to be done away, true progress will begin to be made, and the Kingdom of God will come apace.

[1] St. Matthew xxiii. 37. [2] St. John xvii. 21.

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